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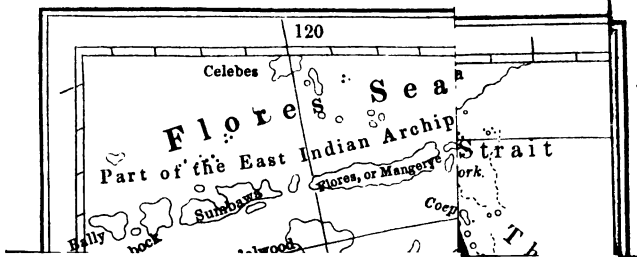


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A

# VISIT TO AUSTRALIA

AND

## Its Gold Regions.

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PUBLISHED UNDER THE DIRECTION OF  
THE COMMITTEE OF GENERAL LITERATURE AND EDUCATION,  
APPOINTED BY THE SOCIETY FOR PROMOTING  
CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE.

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LONDON:

PRINTED FOR THE

SOCIETY FOR PROMOTING CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE;

SOLD AT THE DEPOSITORY,

GREAT QUEEN STREET, LINCOLN'S INN FIELDS;

4, ROYAL EXCHANGE; 16, HANOVER STREET, HANOVER SQUARE;

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# CONTENTS.



## CHAPTER I.

PAGE

FAREWELL TO ENGLAND—THE DEPARTURE—THE SEA—THE PETRELS—ISLANDS ON THE ROUTE—THE TRADE WINDS— THE TROPICS—A DEAD CALM—THE CORYPHENE—THE PORPOISE—THE WHITE SHARK—MEETING A SHIP— WRITING HOME—THE CAPE—THE ISLAND OF ST. PAUL— LAND HO!—ARRIVAL AT ADELAIDE . . . . .	1
--	---

## CHAPTER II.

THE COLONY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA—ITS EARLY HISTORY AND PRESENT CONDITION—ITS PORT AND CAPITAL—THE CITY OF ADELAIDE—ITS MINERAL RICHES—ITS GENERAL FEA- TURES AND CAPABILITIES . . . . .	23
---	----

## CHAPTER III.

THE COLONY OF VICTORIA, ITS EARLY HISTORY, AND RAPID DEVELOPMENT—THE CITY OF MELBOURNE, AND THE TOWN OF GEELONG—THE PASTORAL DISTRICTS—CAPABILITIES OF THE COLONY . . . . .	51
--	----

## CHAPTER IV.

	PAGE
THE COLONY OF NEW SOUTH WALES—THE HARBOUR OF PORT JACKSON—THE CITY OF SYDNEY—THE PARAMATTA RIVER —THE GENERAL FEATURES, AND PRESENT CONDITION OF THE COLONY . . . . .	90

## CHAPTER V.

GENERAL FEATURES OF THE AUSTRALIAN CONTINENT—ITS SITUATION ON THE GLOBE—ITS MOUNTAINS AND RIVERS— ITS BOTANY AND ZOOLOGY—THE ABORIGINAL INHABITANTS, THEIR MANNERS AND CUSTOMS . . . . .	137
---	-----

## CHAPTER VI.

THE GOLD REGIONS—THEIR DISCOVERY AND RICHNESS— STATE OF SOCIETY PRODUCED—THE “YIELD” FROM THE MINES—PROBABLE POLITICAL AND SOCIAL EFFECTS OF THE DISCOVERY . . . . .	164
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## AUSTRALIA AND ITS GOLD REGIONS.

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### CHAPTER I.

FAREWELL TO ENGLAND—THE DEPARTURE—THE SEA—THE PETRELS—ISLANDS ON THE ROUTE—THE TRADE WINDS—THE TROPICS—A DEAD CALM—THE CORYPHEE—THE PORPOISE—THE WHITE SHARK—MEETING A SHIP—WRITING HOME—THE CAPE—THE ISLAND OF ST. PAUL—LAND HO!—ARRIVAL AT ADELAIDE.

It was about eight o'clock on a fine summer's evening when we went on board our vessel at Plymouth. The sun had set in all his

splendour ; the new moon, red with the hues of evening, hung just over Mount Edgecombe ; twilight was gathering around us, and all nature was so still and beautiful, that we forgot to think how many were quitting the shores of their native country, perhaps for ever. The little groups of friends, assembled on the beach to catch the last farewell glimpse, were soon lost to our sight, and the sombre shades of night gathered around us. In a few minutes more we exchanged this scene of repose for the bustle ever attendant on the first evening of the departure of an emigrant ship.

The next morning, about four o'clock, we were awakened by the noise of the sailors above our heads, hoisting sail, and raising the anchor ; and when we went on deck, at eight o'clock, we found that the vessel was outside the Breakwater, and that we had really commenced our voyage ; and in the evening, although the wind was rather against us, the shores of Old England could scarcely be distinguished from the clouds that were gathered along the horizon.

Everything in a life on board ship being new to us, our attention was fully occupied for the first few days. We felt ourselves, as it were, in a new world, and we scanned every feature of it with the same relish with which a child

inspects a fresh toy; or rather, perhaps, with the same deep interest with which a philosopher examines an unknown specimen of nature's works. The novelty, however, was soon over; we were speedily accustomed to the change, and we then began to think of the many weeks which would elapse ere we should reach our destination, and of the probable dreariness of such a lengthened absence from the land.

There is scarcely any conceivable position, however, in which we can be placed, wherein an intelligent mind may not find ample source of interest and instruction; and a sea voyage, so far from being the monotonous thing we should at first imagine, offers the most delightful opportunities "to look through nature up to nature's God" that an observing man can desire. It is the more delightful, inasmuch as there is such a total absence of all the ordinary cares of this life: all things are provided for you; you have only to eat, drink, and be merry, and you have ample time to observe and ponder on the vast beauties of the mighty deep. The change from one climate to another, so marked because so sudden; the daily companionship with creatures strange and wonderful, that constantly surround the ship; the grandeur and ever-varying loveliness of the vast expanse of sea and sky; the occasional

meeting with other vessels, and the deep excitement felt when approaching within sight of land—be it but a solitary and barren island—all contribute to render a few months' sojourn on the waters a source of extreme gratification.

We had not proceeded far on our path across the trackless waste, before we were enlivened by the visits of those cheerful little birds, the Petrels,—the constant companions of the sailor, by whom they are familiarly called “Mother Carey's Chickens.” They are peculiarly ocean birds, rarely approaching the shores, except when they seek gloomy and inaccessible rocks for the purpose of incubation. Scarcely larger than the swallow, one wonders that so frail a bird should dare to brave the fury of the tempest; but when the masts are creaking, and the cordage shrieking in the fierce blast, and when the sea is lashed into mountainous waves, whose foaming crests are torn off in mists by the fury of the gale, the little petrel flits hither and thither, now treading the brow of the watery hills, now sweeping through the valley, piping its singular note with as much glee as if it were the very spirit of the storm which the superstitious mariner attributes to its evil agency. Flocks of these little birds often accompany ships for many days successively;

not, as has been asserted, to seek refuge from the storm, but to feed on the refuse particles which the cook now and then throws overboard, or on the floating substances which the motion of the ship may bring to the surface. It is a pleasing sight to see them crowd up close under the stern, with confiding fearlessness, their sooty wings extended horizontally, and their tiny web-feet put down to feel the water while they pick up the minute atoms of food of which they are in search. They seem to have the power of dispensing with sleep for very long intervals. Wilson, one of the most accurate observers, has recorded a fact in illustration of this: "In firing at these birds, a quill feather was broken in each wing of an individual, and hung fluttering in the wind, which rendered it so conspicuous among the rest, that it was known to all on board; this bird, notwithstanding the inconvenience, continued with us for nearly a week, during which time we sailed a distance of more than four hundred miles." It is stated that these birds are never known to alight on any part of the ship, or its rigging. Is it not a pity that such interesting little creatures should become the object of a meaningless superstition? The persuasion that they are, in some mysterious way, connected with the creation of storms, is so prevalent among seamen,



that these birds are objects of general dislike—nay, hatred—and the sailors will occasionally give vent to execrations against these “devil’s imps,” as they call them, when a gale happens to follow, or be accompanied by, their visits.

No inconsiderable degree of interest was experienced when we arrived in sight of any of the islands which lie in the track of vessels to Australia. We passed the beautiful island of Madeira, and close by the Canary Islands, on one of which stands the lofty peak of Teneriffe. Further on we sighted the little Island of Ascension, from which large supplies of turtle are obtained; and still further on we caught a glimpse of the lonely rock of St. Helena, where the Emperor Napoleon spent the closing years of his eventful life. When we were nearing any of these places, every one anxiously strained his eyes towards that part of the horizon which was pointed out. By-and-by the shout of “Land ho!” would strike upon every ear with the effect of an electric shock; every eye was instantly on the alert; but we landsmen looked long in the direction of the seaman’s finger before we could satisfy ourselves that we were gazing on anything more than evanescent cloud. “Now,” we said confidently, “now we can see it.” Meanwhile the ship would rush on before a cheerful breeze, we would go below to break-

fast, and on our return to deck, there would be no longer room for doubt, for there, straight before us, would lie the land high and blue above the water.

We had not been many days at sea before we began to observe that the sun daily attained a more elevated position at noon, while the pole-star nightly drew nearer and nearer to the horizon, distinctly telling us of our rapid progress southward. We soon also got within the influence of those never-failing assistants to our progress, the "Trade Winds,"—and it is as well always to be prepared for the approach to their vicinity, as our first notification of their proximity was the sudden upsetting of everything movable in the ship, ourselves included. Propelled cheerily on our course by these beneficent winds, we soon reached the tropics; every day at noon we saw the sun reaching to a higher and a higher point, until it appeared directly above our heads. The wind gradually became lighter until we arrived at the calm latitudes, where we lay for two long weeks without making any progress. The captain and the crew whistled for wind with as much perseverance as though they had never been disappointed, and every one watched anxiously for the least breathings of a breeze. Nothing can exceed the tantalizing tedium of this condition; our wearied.

eyes gazed intently on the glistening sea, and eagerly watched the slightest ruffling of its mirror-like surface; but on glancing at the feather vane on the ship's quarter, our hopes faded as we perceived it hanging motionless upon its staff. A still more delicate test was then resorted to—a hot coal was thrown overboard, and we all anxiously watched the little cloud of white steam to see if there was a trace of any side motion in the ship; but no! the vapour ascended perpendicularly till it dispersed in air. Now and then the polished surface of the ocean suddenly changed into a blue ripple. Expectation became strong, for there was no doubt of the reality of the motion; but, before the sails could feel the breeze, it had died away again; the air was as still, and the sea as glassy, as before. Not a cloud intercepted the fierce burning rays of the sun, which poured down directly on our heads. The decks became burning hot to the feet; the melting pitch boiled up from the seams; the tar continually dropped from the rigging; the masts and booms displayed gaping cracks; and the flukes of the anchors were too hot to be touched. In vain we sought refuge beneath the sails which hung lazily from the yards, for so perpendicular were the fiery beams at noon-day, that scarcely a shadow was thrown anywhere, and even that

little was constantly shifting from the change of the vessel's position in the swell.

Yet, though day after day rolled on and left us still in the same position, there were many things to beguile the weariness of the time. The gorgeous beauty of the setting sun almost made amends for his unmitigated heat by day. As his orb approached the western horizon, the clouds, which had been absent during the day, began to form in that quarter of the heavens, and, as he sank, to assume hues of the richest purple, gorgeously edged with gold, — now hiding his disc, now allowing him to flash out his softened effulgence through crimson openings, till he set beneath the mountain-like clouds that seemed to lie heavily upon the surface of the sea. Then the whole array began to take the appearance of a lovely landscape, the clouds forming land, and the open sky seeming like calm water. Sometimes, we fancied we saw the long capes and bold promontories of a broken and picturesque coast, deeply indented with bays and creeks, and fringed with groups of islands; at other times silvery lakes, studded with little wooded islets, appeared, embosomed in mountains, or surrounded by gentle slopes, here and there clothed with umbrageous woods; and often such an appearance of reality had these fleeting scenes, that it was difficult, after

gazing at them for a few minutes, to believe that they were mere passing shadows. The mind forgot the world of waters around, and, in the enthusiasm of the hour, flew in busy imagination to that beautiful land, and roamed among its hills and valleys in dreamy enjoyment.

These beautiful scenes were, however, as transitory as they were lovely. Near the tropics night comes on with a rapidity quite startling to those accustomed to the long twilight of northern latitudes. The rich hues with which the western sky is suffused, the crimson and ruddy gold, change speedily to a warm and swarthy brown. One by one the stars come out, and light up the sky with a strange and unwonted lustre. "From the time we enter the torrid zone," says Humboldt, "we are never wearied with admiring, every night, the beauty of the southern sky, which, as we advanced towards the south, opened new constellations to our view. We feel an indescribable sensation when, on approaching the equator, and particularly in passing from one hemisphere to another, we see those stars which we have contemplated from our infancy progressively sink, and finally disappear. Nothing awakens in the traveller a livelier remembrance of the immense distance by which he is separated from his country than the aspect of an unknown fir-

mament. The grouping of the stars of the first magnitude, some scattered nebulae, rivaling in splendour the Milky Way, and tracts of space remarkable for their extreme blackness, give a particular physiognomy to the southern sky. This sight fills with admiration even those, who, uninstructed in the branches of accurate science, feel the same emotions of delight in the contemplation of the heavenly vault as in the view of a beautiful landscape, or a majestic river. A traveller has no need to be a botanist to recognise the torrid zone on the mere aspect of its vegetation; and, without having acquired any notions of astronomy, he feels he is not in Europe, when he sees the immense constellation of the Ship, or the phosphorescent Clouds of Magellan, arise on the horizon. The heavens and the earth, everything in the equinoctial regions, assume an exotic character."

Between, or in the neighbourhood of the tropics, our ship was rarely unaccompanied by fishes of many species, which, in the clear waters, were visible for many fathoms beneath the keel. The most common, and, perhaps, the most beautiful, were the coryphene, miscalled by seamen the dolphin. We were never weary of admiring their beauty. Their form is deep, but thin and somewhat flattened, and

their sides are of a brilliant pearly white, like polished silver. In small companies of five or six they usually appear and play around and beneath the ship, sometimes close to the surface, and sometimes at such a depth that our eyes could but dimly discern their shadowy outline. Night and day these interesting creatures are sporting about, appearing insusceptible of weariness. Their motion is very rapid when their full powers are put forth, as in the pursuit of the little flying-fish. It is to the coryphene that most accounts of dolphins which we read of in voyages must be referred, as, owing to some mistake of identity not easily accounted for, the name of dolphin has been almost universally misapplied by our seamen to the coryphene, while they confound the true dolphin with the porpoise.

The appearance of a number of porpoises is generally an event of interest, as the opportunity of securing one is seldom neglected. In these cases, as soon as the striker is named, every one rushes to the most available point for getting a full view of the operations. Presently a fish will present his side, the harpoon will be thrown, but, from excitement or over-eagerness, perhaps without success. Then again there is a stir; another monster is rolling towards the boat. This time a more careful aim is

taken; the harpoon flies from the striker's hand; in an instant the white spray from the bow becomes crimsoned with the rush of blood, and we know that the spear has done its duty. Now all is confusion; some are cheering, others are calling to the man at the rope, "Pull away, or the fish will get under the bow;" whilst many, alarmed for the safety of those who, on the fish being struck, are pressing forward to the most dangerous situations, are shouting to them to get back to the ship. Amidst the confusion the poor porpoise is soon brought to the edge of the water, the blood issuing in a flood from the wound in its side; but its strength is still immense, and it is not until a rope has been bound round the body that with great difficulty it is brought on deck.

In a few minutes the head is off, and the greater part of the skin and blubber is removed from the body. All are anxious to possess a share of the spoil, so much salt provisions having rendered the porpoise an anticipated luxury, and all crowd round the carvers with bustling eagerness. The carcase is soon cut up, and distributed; and the next morning the frying-pans, stew-pans, and all other pans, are in active requisition: breakfast off broiled porpoise gladdens every heart, and such is the relish with which it is devoured, that we may



easily conceive how little quarter or pity will be shown to the next shoal that may come in our way.

Another visitant who very freely gives us much of his company is the white shark, probably the most terrific monster that cleaves the waves; certainly the most hated and at the same time feared by the sailor. The catching of fish is at all times a pleasing amusement to the mariner; but in catching the shark there is a peculiar avidity, in which the gratification of a deep-seated hatred of the species, and vengeance for his murderous propensities, form the leading features.

When a shark is taken, whether entrapped by the concealed hook or struck by the open violence of the harpoon, and brought on deck, he is subjected to every indignity which an insane fury can heap upon him; beat, stabbed, and kicked, and even reviled as if capable of understanding language. In truth, there is no animal, terrestrial or aquatic, which, so to speak, has "villain" written on its countenance so legibly as the shark. The shape of the head, and the form of the mouth, opening so far beneath, are anything but prepossessing, and there is a peculiar malignity in the expression of the eye, that seems almost satanic, and which one can never look upon without shuddering. The

mouth is armed with teeth of a very peculiar construction; they are triangular in form, thin and flat, the central part being thicker than the edges, which are as keen as a lancet, and cut into serratures like a saw. In very large sharks the teeth have been found nearly two inches in breadth. They are placed in rows, sometimes to the number of six, one within another, lying nearly flat when not in use, but erected in a moment to seize prey; and as they are so placed in the jaw that each tooth is capable of independent motion, being furnished with its own muscles, and as the power of the jaws is enormous, they form the most terrific and formidable apparatus for the supply of a carnivorous appetite.

The fatal voracity of the shark is well known. Instances are numerous of swimmers in the tropical seas having been severed in twain at one snap, or deprived of limbs; while on more than one occasion the whole body of a man has been taken from this living sepulchre. Yet after all, this sanguinary voracity is but the result of an unerring instinct, without the exercise of which its life could not be sustained, and it is therefore perfectly absurd to entertain feelings of personal revenge against it.

Every one may imagine how much the tedium of a long voyage is relieved by the company of

other vessels, or even by the speaking of a passing ship; but few who have only seen vessels lying in tiers side by side at quays or wharfs, are at all aware of, or can readily understand, the anxious care with which commanders guard against two ships on the high sea coming within even a considerable distance of each other. Passengers on their first voyage, when a vessel is speaking at what they think a most uncivil distance, often wish that they would come nearer, particularly if the wind is light. Little do they think that when it is a perfect calm, the dread of contact is then the greatest, as if there be wind enough to give the vessel "steerage way," she is under control and the danger may be avoided. Captain Basil Hall says on this subject: "How it happens I do not know; but on occasions of perfect calm, or such as appear to be perfect calm, the ships of a fleet generally drift away from one another, so that at the end of a few hours the whole circle bounded by the horizon is speckled over by these unmanageable hulks, as they may for the time be considered. It will occasionally happen, indeed, that two ships draw so near in a calm, as to incur the risk of falling on board one another. I need scarcely mention, that even in the smoothest water ever found in the open sea two large ships coming into actual contact

must prove a formidable encounter. As long as they are apart, their gentle and rather graceful movements are fit subjects of admiration; but this admiration changes to alarm when ships come so close as to risk a contact; for these motions which appear so slow and gentle to the eye are irresistible in their force, and as the chances are against the two vessels moving in exactly the same direction at the same moment, they must speedily grind or tear one another to pieces. Supposing them to come in contact side by side, the first roll would probably tear away the fore and main channels of both ships; the next roll, by interlacing the lower yards, and entangling the spars of one ship with the shrouds and backstays of another, would, in all likelihood, bring down all three masts of both ships in one furious crash. Beneath the ruins of the spars, the coils of rigging, and the enormous folds of canvass, might lie crushed many of the best hands, who, from being the foremost to spring forward in such seasons of danger, are surest to be sacrificed. After this first catastrophe the ships would probably drift away from one another for a little while, only to tumble together again and again, till they had ground one another to the water's edge, and one or both of them would fill and go down. In such encounters it is impossible

to stop the mischief; and oak and iron break and crumble in pieces like sealing wax and piecrust. Many instances of such accidents are on record, but to prevent these frightful rencontres care is always taken to hoist out the boats in good time, and, if need be, to tow the ships apart; or, what is generally sufficient, to tow the ships' heads in opposite directions.

“It is scarcely known why this should have the effect; but it certainly appears that, be the calm ever so complete, or dead, as the term is, a vessel generally forges ahead, or steals along imperceptibly in the direction she is looking to; possibly from the conformation of the hull.”

These accidents, however, are exceedingly rare; the very danger, by the watchfulness it causes, tending to prevent their occurrence; and vessels can always approach with sufficient nearness, without risk of collision, to carry on a correspondence or conversation. We shall never forget the bustle and excitement caused by the intelligence of a homeward-bound sail in sight; and when to our great delight she came within hail, and we heard that the captain, finding we had newspapers, expressed his determination to come on board, there was a simultaneous rush below, and pens, ink, and paper were in such request, that a dealer in stationery would

have realized a little competency. Then came the questions, Where are we? what is the day of the month? how long shall we have to write? and the pens flew over the surface of the paper like lightning. Meantime the captain had come on board, and word was soon brought that he was ready to leave. Hasty terminations, and the delightful intelligence to dear friends at home that all was well, were soon completed.

One man brought an open sheet of paper to the captain covered with letters of enormous size which no doubt his friends would understand; but he had quite forgotten to mention who his friends were, and had not this deficiency been seen by some one near, the letter would have been of little service. All business matter being completed, the stranger captain went over the side. Presently another letter was seen emerging from the hold; this also was without direction. "You are too late, Pat," was heard on all sides; but Pat did not believe it, and amidst cries of "Make haste, my boy," he completed his task in a jiffy; but the boat was gone! A cry was heard, "Fling it to them;" he did so; and, favoured by the wind, the letter dropped safely into the boat. Not one of the crowd that hung over the side but was delighted at Pat's successful throw. A

heartly cheer rose from the ship when the letter lighted upon the boat, and was answered by a counter cheer from the boat's crew, as one of them held aloft the precious missive, whilst poor Pat, with his rough hand, wiped away the tear which started involuntarily from his eye as he thought of the distant ones so anxious about his welfare.

In a few hours the stranger ship became a mere speck upon the horizon, and as the shades of evening drew near we were no longer able to discern it. Onward, and onward, still we went. Then we crossed the line, which many on board actually expected to find a palpable reality,—two or three even going so far as to ask for the glasses that they might see it more distinctly! Then we got into the Trade Winds again, which bore us on our course with railway speed. Now we approached the Cape, and, rounding it, entered the Indian Ocean. The winds being still favourable, it was not long before we reached the welcome “half way house” between the Cape and Australia—the island of St. Paul; and in another week every eye was straining for a sight of the “promised land flowing with milk and honey,” which was to be our future home. During the past day or two the men had been engaged in scraping the masts, poop, &c., clearing the decks of all

lumber, and shifting the horse-box and cooking apparatus, to make room for the chain-cable, which from the depths below was now brought to light.

Nothing in the voyage could exceed the stirring interest which was excited by the announcement of Land ho ! at the termination of our course. The lucky sailor who had given the information, in coming down the rigging, would have had grog enough for a week's consumption if he had accepted all the offers that were made to him ; and although the desired point, or headland, could not yet be distinguished from the deck, a general hubbub was running through the cabins, and a display of caps, ribbons, collars, &c., all most eloquently proclaimed that we soon expected to be safely disembarked.

Soon the west cape of Kangaroo Island was made ; the high land of Cape Jervis and Rapid Bay speedily came in sight ; and now the ship glided smoothly over the shallow waters of St. Vincent's Gulf. On the left hand, as the ship sailed north, we saw the low and distant coast of Yorke's Peninsula, whilst, as we neared the right-hand or eastern shore of the gulf, the green and picturesque hills of the Mount Lofty ranges attracted and deserved our attention. The scene is beautiful at any season,



but especially in the spring, about September, October, and November. After sailing up the gulf, a pilot was seen making for the ship from Holdfast Bay, and presently came alongside, then on to the quarter-deck, and our captain was no longer commander. A few hours more and we were in the city of Adelaide, the capital of South Australia.





INTERIOR OF A SETTLER'S HUT.

## CHAPTER II.

THE COLONY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA—ITS EARLY HISTORY AND PRESENT CONDITION—ITS PORT AND CAPITAL, THE CITY OF ADELAIDE—ITS MINERAL RICHES—ITS GENERAL FEATURES AND CAPABILITIES.

It was in the year 1805 that Captain Flinders first explored that portion of the Australian continent which is now known as the Colony of South Australia. He landed first on

Kangaroo Island, which acts as a natural break-water to the Gulf of St. Vincent. This island, which received its name from the large number of Kangaroos that were found upon it, is about 100 miles long, and at the widest part about 25 miles broad. It is very hilly, and the general appearance is uninviting. There are in the island extensive lakes, the water of which is saltier than sea-water, and in the summer season the evaporation causes a deposit of salt upon the banks, which is collected and sold in Adelaide. It was upon this island that, in the year 1836, the first colonists landed; but they soon became dissatisfied with their locality, and sailed over to the mainland at Rapid Bay, near Cape Jervis, and there founded a settlement. They at once commenced the cultivation of the land, and were so enraptured with the beautiful appearance of the country that, overlooking many natural disadvantages, they determined upon establishing there the future capital of the colony. It was not long, however, before the more sagacious amongst them began to perceive that, however little those disadvantages might be felt at first, they would prove seriously detrimental when the colonists became more numerous. They, therefore, again started off, and, sailing towards some hills seen to the north at a distance of about forty miles,

they landed at Holdfast Bay, and discovered the district now called the Adelaide Plains. Here a level grassy country, intersected by picturesque bands of trees, and backed by a chain of hills of moderate height, presented to them not only a beautiful tract, but a wide extent of excellent land. After exploring these plains for some time, they came upon an extensive chain of ponds in the bed of a watercourse, which subsequently received the name of the River Torrens. In the winter it is a large and rapid stream, but in the summer it is much diminished. As soon as this river was discovered, the surveyors commenced marking out the future city of Adelaide, the larger portion of which it was decided should be on the south side of the river. The surveyors of Adelaide certainly appear to have discharged their duty with much judgment; the streets (laid out at right angles) are from 60 to 120 feet in width; and besides twenty-two principal streets of great breadth, there were several squares and terraces, so designed as to ensure ample space, and a free circulation of air in the heart of the city.

The plans were scarcely completed ere a mania commenced for the acquisition of town land. Ships had arrived with monied people, and at every auction a scramble ensued for the best lots. Every purchaser endeavoured by all

means in his power to render that part which he possessed the busiest and most bustling portion of the town. Houses, and rows of huts of every material and form, were run up with the greatest speed. Bricklayers, masons, carpenters, and all who could render themselves in the slightest degree serviceable in building operations, were sought after with avidity, and received enormous wages. As fresh arrivals took place, and the price of houses and land increased, every one became infected with the desire to take advantage of the opportunity of rapidly becoming rich. Flocks of sheep, and herds of cattle, from Van Diemen's land, supplied the colonist with fresh meat, for the attention of all was so absorbed by building speculations, that no one as yet dreamt of the necessity of going into "the bush," or of cultivating land. Each purchaser speedily sold his lot at an enormous premium; but he repented of his precipitation on seeing it immediately resold at double the price he had received for it. Again he invested his capital in a fresh purchase; and then he wrote home to his friends in the old country acquainting them with his good fortune, and advising them to come out and "bring money in their purses." Artisans also sent letters to the poor relatives they had left behind, telling them that they

could earn enough in two days to live like gentlemen all the rest of the week; and these communications producing their effect, gradually brought in hundreds of immigrants, both capitalists and labourers, all anxious to secure their share of such unexampled prosperity. Merchants also vied with each other in sending cargoes of goods to so excellent a market; and even the adventurous bushmen of New South Wales, hearing of the extraordinary price which sheep and cattle were commanding in the new colony, started overland, and, overcoming all the difficulties of six hundred miles of unexplored country, appeared with their flocks and herds in the streets of Adelaide, to the astonishment of the inhabitants. Publicans made a fortune in three years. Gentlemen, elated with the increasing nominal value of their property, kept open house to all their friends. Provisions rose to an enormous price. Cows were sold at 40*l.*; bullocks at 100*l.* per pair; sheep 3*l.* to 4*l.* per head; meat was 1*s.* 6*d.* to 2*s.* per lb.; bread 2*s.* 6*d.* the 4 lb. loaf; flour 100*l.* per ton; and land rose from 3*l.* or 4*l.* to 1,000*l.* and 2,000*l.* per acre. All classes were pleased and satisfied. The capitalists rejoiced at the enormous price which their land and houses brought them in a community where all were anxious to purchase, and none to sell.

Artisans, notwithstanding the high price of food, were satisfied, as the amount of their wages increased in proportion; merchants and tradesmen were overjoyed at their enormous profits; and the whole community were in ecstasy at the progress their new colony was making.

Soon, however, came a change. Had there been one unexcited observer, possessed of good common sense, and having no personal interest in the affairs of the colony, he might have seen, that, as there was no land cultivated, and every variety of provision had to be imported and paid for in hard cash, the money brought in by the capitalists was gradually flowing away, without the remotest chance of returning. As long as the capitalists were believed to be really rich, their credit was proportionately great. Adelaide agents were glad to supply goods to any extent on credit to their customers, and, from the scarcity of cash, took credit also from the home merchants in their turn. About the same time the New Zealand Project was publicly set forth in London, and monied men who were disposed to emigrate directed their course to that colony. This consequently stopped those supplies of money to Adelaide which had hitherto sustained the mania.

The agents were soon compelled to restrict their credits and to press their customers for payment, and the latter were under the necessity of selling their property in order to meet their engagements; but sales on credit being useless for the purpose in view, few buyers were to be found, and prices dropped. The fall of prices, and their tendency to get still lower, induced holders to endeavour to realize before they sustained still further loss. Then came a glut of property upon the markets, and the bitter fruits of the land and building mania which had taken possession of the people of Adelaide soon became too apparent. Ruin stared every one in the face; all credit was gone; those who had been living luxuriously, either absconded, or declared themselves hopelessly insolvent. The agents, not being able to realize their claims, also shared in the general wreck. The home merchants stopped the supplies, and scarcity and starvation appeared inevitable. To add to the evil, shipload after shipload of emigrant labourers arrived, who, in place of high wages and prosperity, found no employment. These unfortunate men applied to the Governor, who was compelled, in order to preserve them from absolute famine, to employ the more destitute on public works. Even those who had landed with a small supply of money



found it speedily exhausted, and themselves left without the means of removal, and thus swelled the list of applicants for assistance. The colonial government consequently exhausted its funds, and was compelled to borrow from the sister colony; and, with a government in debt and embarrassed, the upper and middle classes nearly all bankrupt, and the labouring classes in a state of absolute starvation, the colony sunk into a gulf of apparently hopeless ruin.

Out of this building mania, however, a branch movement of a similar character had arisen, which, although adding, for the time, to the evil, contained within itself the germ of a future revival and prosperity. When the best lots of town land in Adelaide were all purchased, and the prices became such that few would venture to speculate further, many turned their attention to the most eligible among the country sections, and cutting them up into acre, and half and quarter-acre lots, laid them out as villages, realizing large prices as compared with the original cost, although small as regards the comparison with the land in Adelaide. A multitude of little suburban hamlets thus sprang into existence, many of which were named after the well-remembered suburbs of Hampstead, Islington, Kensington, &c., or bore the names of their founders, as Walkerville, or Smith's-town.

This phase of the mania, however, had the effect of drawing many people from the city into the country, who, living in their "villas," began to enclose and cultivate their acres. These soon found that, from the natural excellence of the land, all kinds of corn and vegetable produce grew luxuriantly; and still more, that the price of all these products was such as to yield them a handsome return; and thus that which was originally done for mere ornament to the cottages, was pursued for profit. The land in the interior was then bought, fenced in, and cultivated; and people began to flock into the "bush." And although the discovery of the proper course of proceeding was made too late to save the colony from the disastrous effects which we have spoken of, it was still in time to prevent it from being entirely and irretrievably lost. The real value and fertility of the land being demonstrated, and the want of employment for the myriads of labourers who had been drawn to the colony having reduced the rate of wages to the lowest possible sum, a more enduring prosperity dawned upon the colonists while in the very depths of despair. Those who had any capital remaining went at once into the country; the quantity of land put under crop rapidly increased; the anxiety of labourers of

every class to obtain some better means of living than the pittance derived from making roads at the government expense, led them to flock into the bush in greater numbers than could be employed. The crops grew with such richness that the people were delighted, and wondered how they could so long have overlooked so abundant a source of wealth. Fences sprang up along the roads; houses and cottages appeared in every direction; sheep and cattle, fallen to their legitimate price, grazed in the rich meadows, and the flail of the thresher began to be heard. By the end of 1841, provisions were again becoming abundant; a plentiful harvest ensued; and it appeared by the government returns for 1843, that corn and flour to the value of nearly 10,000*l.* was exported, besides leaving sufficient at home to supply the whole of the people with cheap food. Thus, in a period of less than seven years, a colony had been established under the most favourable circumstances; had been brought to the very verge of ruin by an absurd mania, and then had arisen again, like a phoenix from its ashes, from distress and misery unparalleled in colonial history, to become once more a successful and prosperous community.

Let us now direct our attention to the present state of the colony. But a few years ago

and the site of the present port was a mere swamp, covered with mangrove trees and ponds of stagnant salt water. It is now a business-like place, and for the short time it has been in existence has made wonderful progress. The Government has erected substantial wharves and other buildings, and made it a convenient landing-place for goods and passengers. The ships lie as close to the shore as in an English dock, and are safe from injury in even the roughest weather. From the great increase of shipping consequent upon the discovery of the mineral riches of the colony, the present port is far too small, and arrangements have been made to remove the site nearer to the sea, and to construct a railroad from the port to the city. There are some fine hotels at the port, and some good houses, although the greater part of them are wooden buildings of three or four rooms. But numerous structures of a more substantial character are in course of erection. Every hour omnibuses run from the port to the city, a distance of eight miles. The road is perfectly level, and a portion of it (perhaps at the present moment the whole) is macadamized. The bustle along this great highway generally excites surprise amongst new comers. Most of them imagine that everything they see will present a strange if not an uncouth appearance.

To their great delight, however, almost all they see puts them in mind of the old country. Houses and shops, shipping, vehicles, men, women and children, all present precisely the same appearance as if they had journeyed but twelve miles instead of twelve thousand from their former home. As Mr. Wilkinson (the author of that excellent work "South Australia and its Resources") says, "Familiar-looking inns and shops, and genuine English shopmen, take one quite by surprise. The cheese, butter, and 'bakers' bread,' the joints of meat, and bundles of vegetables exposed for sale, and in fact the *tout ensemble*, is English and comfortable."

Leaving the port behind, you pass over the level ground, smooth as a bowling-green, on which the railway is to be constructed; neat whitewashed cottages and farm-houses stand by the road-side, close to well-filled stackyards. The earth is red, and looks too heavy for growing good corn; but it is better than its appearance betokens, and frequently yields an average of thirty bushels per acre. Passing through two villages you arrive at the Frome Bridge, and then the road runs through the Park Lands which surround the city, and which have been wisely preserved for the recreation of the inhabitants. These Park Lands are very pleasant,

and have much the appearance of an English domain; they are adorned with large native trees, principally high gum-trees, growing in clumps, and the river runs through the grounds for some distance, with handsome foliage overhanging it.

The city of Adelaide, on entering it from the bridge over the Torrens, presents rather an



THE CITY OF ADELAIDE.

imposing appearance, and still more impresses a Londoner with the idea of "home." The

numberless vehicles of all descriptions, drays with sturdy horses, tradesmen's carts, omnibuses, stage-coaches, conveyance carts, barouches, and gigs, with the busy throng of foot-passengers, the fine shops, many of which would be no disgrace to Regent-street, make it difficult for an Englishman to believe that he is so many thousand miles away from his own country. The city is a large place, not yet nearly built over ; the majority of houses existing at the present time were built for persons of small means, mainly constructed of nine-inch brick-work, with roofs of shingles from Van Diemen's Land, in many instances so neatly put together as to render it impossible at a short distance to distinguish them from slates. Besides these humbler dwellings, there are many of a higher character, such as the Bank of Australia, which is a magnificent building, and the new Post-office, which is a St. Martin's Le Grand on a smaller scale.

In no other of the Australian possessions yet occupied are there so many capabilities for profitable occupation. There are large tracts of country bearing excellent crops of rich grass, and for miles destitute of a single tree, which afford the finest pasturage for hundreds of thousands of sheep and cattle. There are immense forests of serviceable trees, many of them rising to the height of forty or fifty feet from the ground to

the lowest branch, and affording employment for a vast number of splitters, sawyers, fencers, hurdle makers, carters, carpenters, charcoal burners, and persons who supply fuel. There are also considerable tracts of the finest arable land in the world, capable of growing, in the utmost perfection, wheat, barley, oats, maize, hops, and all kinds of fruits and vegetables; and it is said that the finest wheat ever exhibited in the London Corn Market was exported from this colony. There are many profitable whale-fisheries upon the coast, and the mineral districts of the colony are unrivalled for their richness. There are mines of lead, tin, copper, silver, emery, plumbago and iron; and although a productive gold "digging" has yet to be discovered, gold has certainly been found; and there is little doubt, considering the numbers who are tempted to explore the country by the promise of 1000*l.* reward, that the colony will not long remain without the attraction of a gold mine. There are stone quarries, supplying excellent material in the greatest abundance; and slate quarries, not of blue slate only, but of a peculiar kind of white slate-stone, which splits off in large slabs, and is as soft as the blue slate, and can therefore be easily worked. There is also a blue marble, which works well, and is of great utility; and limestone fit for burning



is found in almost every district. The discovery of coal only is requisite to make the list as complete as it is valuable.

It is mainly to the mineral riches of the colony that South Australia owes its prosperity and importance. It was in the year 1844 that the existence of mineral wealth began to attract universal attention. "In 1844," says Mr. Wilkinson, "a loaded dray coming down a steep hill in sight of the town, which was distant about three miles, was obliged to have a large tree dragging behind it to prevent its rushing upon the team of bullocks. This tree coming into violent contact with a rock or stone at the side of the road, shattered off some portions, and revealed to sight a bright silvery substance, which, on being shown to people acquainted with minerals, was pronounced to be lead-ore, or galena. As if a spark of fire had fallen amongst gunpowder every one was on the *qui vive*, and the excitement was intense. The specimens were stared at, and examined, and tested in every way. Masses of people crowded about the spot from which they had been severed; and, armed with chisels, axes, hammers, everything, in fact, that would break the stone, they all set to work. Never, perhaps, was a hill so knocked about. Worthless stones were silyly pocketed and taken home for secret examina-

tion. The utmost caution was observed by those who had a bit of stone discoloured by damp or exposure to the atmosphere. All holders of land orders looked anxiously at their number, as it was found that the possessor of the oldest order gained the prize. At one time No. 307 was sure to win; then No. 274 turned up; he could sell his chance for a very large sum, but, like a clever man, he stuck to his chance—and lost; for No. 180 was now found; and so it went on, until the land was delivered up to the fortunate possessor of the proper order. Then the sinking a shaft was commenced, and after all the fuss the mine was found to be almost valueless. It had, however, the effect of setting every one to work hunting about among rocks and stones, over hill and dale, amongst the watercourses and plains, when it was found that the whole country, north, south, and west, was extensively scattered over with valuable minerals. Copper was found in large quantities and in every direction; every person carried his pocket full of specimens; no other subject was talked of in all societies, and the whole population seemed to be in danger of running as mad about minerals as they had been before about the town lands.”

The first important mine discovered was that called the Kapunda; but not long after, a union

of all parties in Adelaide caused a special survey of 20,000 acres to be made, which almost drained the colony of money to pay the requisite sum of 20,000*l.* in due time. The survey having been completed, the parties agreed to divide the land into two portions, the officials and gentlemen taking one ten thousand acres, and the tradesmen the other. A toss-up decided the question; to the tradesmen fell the half called Burra Burra, to the officials the other, named Princess Royal. The former has a world-wide reputation; whilst the name of the other is unknown except in the immediate locality. The shares of the one have sold for as much as fifty times the original price, while those of the other are at about 75 per cent. discount.

The mining operations at Burra Burra were commenced in September 1845, and the ore was found cropping out of the ground in large masses of many thousand tons weight; and so rich, that much of it yields an average of 65 per cent. pure copper; and it is rather singular that a squatter, who had been living and folding his sheep over the ground, never noticed its existence. In the first year 6,359 tons were raised; and 10,745 in the second. In May 1847, the first dividend was paid,—50 per cent.; followed by another of the same amount in the ensuing

month; since which time the progress of the mines has been one of constantly increasing prosperity, until the discovery of the gold regions in the adjacent colony of Victoria, drawing away the miners, has left the proprietors without labourers. This has, up to the latest news, reduced the dividends, and also the price of shares.



BURRA BURRA MINE.

The following description of the Burra Burra appeared in the Adelaide papers:—

“ Proceeding from Mr. Wren’s hotel we passed through a gorge of the northern hill, and in a few minutes found ourselves in view of the ‘ eighth wonder of the world.’ The Burra mines are chiefly in a basin about fifty acres in extent, nearly surrounded with low hills lying confusedly around; confused and irregular hills are indeed the prevailing feature of this district. The workings, however, are comprised in the space of little more than six acres; but this space on a working day is a most animated and astonishing scene. The first thing that strikes the eye are immense piles of earth intersected with vast heaps of ore laid out in a similar style to the broken stones on a macadamized road. Over the heaps are placed five or six great horse-whims, some of which ply night and day. One, in particular, at Kingston Shaft, never rests except on Sundays. During the night it raises ore, and during the day it raises water for cleaning it. No less than thirty shafts have been sunk, most of them to the water, and of course the operations downwards must be suspended till a steam engine, which has been ordered, arrives.<sup>1</sup> The deepest shaft is the King-

<sup>1</sup> The *South Australian Register* for July 1851, announced, under the head of “Arrival of the Monster Engine,” that it had reached the colony in the ship *Joseph Weir*, which was principally freighted with the several parts of the engine, and other machinery for the mine.

ston, which is sunk thirty-five fathoms below the surface, and which contains ten fathoms of water. Between the shafts are the sheds for separating and washing the ore. The ore is washed on a very simple principle. A lever and rod are suspended above troughs filled with water, and a sieve containing the ore is attached to the rod. The cleaner, by jerking the sieve up and down in the water, causes the ore—the heavier body—to sink, and the refuse on the surface is then taken off. It was stated by good authority that there was sufficient ore then on the surface, independent of what was on the road, at the port, on shipboard, or in England, to pay the shareholders 200 per cent. (25,000*l.*) every month for nearly twelve months. The average quantity taken away during the last few weeks has been nearly 100 tons per day; and, as the quantity brought from the mine to the surface is upwards of 80 tons daily, very little impression is made on the accumulations at the mine. We will now attempt to relate our labours in threading the mazes of the vast *souterrain*. We can assure those who read this, that it is not every one who can do it. The man who attempts such a great enterprise should be young and active, should be sound and lithe in limb, and should possess good lungs and no little perseverance. Above all, he should not

be stout, as some of the holes are so narrow that not more than thirteen stone can squeeze through, unless it belongs to a practical miner. You descend and find it only twenty fathoms; you follow on through galleries dotted with copper, down little shafts, and into great vaults, and chambers, and caverns, like Vulcan's forge, where men are seen with candles in their hats or stuck on the rocks, hewing away at the most splendid copper ores that eyes ever beheld. Ever and anon we came to beautiful little malachite arbours, which the miners called their gardens, every side of which being of a bright emerald green, and forming delightful spots in which to rest. A few of the miners grumbled because they had only 1*s.* 3*d.* per pound of tribute, (from this sum the tribute ranges to 2*s.* 6*d.*) and protested that they did not make quite 10% per month; but an old Cornish and Columbian captain, unconnected with the miners, who was present, told us that the miners were habitual grumblers; and we learned afterwards that some of them made as high as 40% or 50% per month, and that the superintendent sends as much as 200% or 300% in a week to Adelaide to invest for the fortunate and industrious. We must, however, mention, for the honour of the men, that the grumblers are a small exception. In some of the vast caverns thirty, forty, and

fifty feet wide, when surrounded on every side with malachite, red oxide, and green and blue carbonates mingled in rich confusion, the miners asked our experienced friend if he had ever seen or heard of anything like the Burra, and were evidently not in the least surprised at his energetic negative. After four or five hours' hard travel through this labyrinth we reascended, leaving still a very large portion of the mine unexamined."

The Burra Burra mine, however, though the most valuable, is not the only one which is in working order. There are several others, as the Montacute, the Murkurta, the Yattagolunga, which will all at one time or other become of great value to the colony. In one of these mines, a short time after the section on which it was situated had been purchased, while sinking a shaft in search of copper, one of the men suddenly broke in upon a vein of metal of a bright yellow colour, totally different in appearance from copper, and which was embedded in a dark chocolate-coloured earth. The vein was about two inches wide, yielding metal in the proportion of about a quarter of an ounce to an inch, and showing a tendency to enlarge in size. An analysis of this metal proved it to be gold, and although the specimen tested was simply separated from the matrix by the fingers, but



not washed or otherwise purified, it yielded ninety-four per. cent. of pure gold. This was in the early part of 1846—more than six years ago; but, although the product of this discovery has not been of much practical importance, it had the effect of demonstrating that South Australia, in common with the sister colonies, possesses a share of auriferous treasures.

The state of affairs at the present time in Adelaide, in consequence of the abundance of gold found in the neighbouring colony of Victoria, is certainly by no means pleasant. The following extract, from the circular of Messrs. J. Stebbings & Co. of Adelaide, dated February 2d, of this year, gives us a vivid impression of the present state of the colony, while it also shadows forth hopes of greater prosperity for the future:—

“The excitement caused by the gold-finding among the inhabitants of this colony has been intense, nearly the whole of our labouring population having left, and those who have not yet done so, intend leaving as soon as possible. The principal part of our male adult population consisted of about 17,000 from twenty-one to forty-five years of age; and it is computed that out of this number 10,000 have left the colony within the last few months. There were from

twelve to fifteen vessels regularly laid on at Port Adelaide for passengers to the Victoria diggings, and from 1,000 to 1,500 souls were leaving the colony weekly. But few females have hitherto left, though they are now beginning to leave. Such a flood of emigration from this place is producing the most disastrous results. The average drain of specie from each of our three local banks, exclusive of the Savings Bank, is just now from 40,000*l.* to 50,000*l.* weekly. Trade is completely stagnated; the stores of the port are filled with wool, copper, tallow, &c., all waiting for shipment. Owing to the scarcity of labour, it is with the utmost difficulty anything can be put on board ship. Seamen are obtaining from 10*l.* to 15*l.* per month for the run to London, and many decline going to England on any terms. Freights are in consequence looking up. Should this state of things continue much longer, it will be questionable whether any ship can leave our harbour for England at all. Landed and household property have become depreciated at least 75 per cent. on their former value. Our mining and smelting interests are suffering severely; most of the men from the works of the Patent Copper Company and the Burra mines are leaving for the diggings. Burra shares have fallen from their maximum point of

225*l.* to 50*l.* per share, and will decline still further. Fortunately, out of the 15,000 bales of wool which we annually ship to England, about 12,000 of this season's clip have already gone, leaving only 3,000 bales or so to be shipped, and it will be no easy matter to get the remainder away.

“The next wool season is likely to be a trying one to the flock-owners, as their shepherds are all leaving; and we fear there will be a great falling off in the export of this staple from these colonies during the ensuing season. When we consider that Australia furnishes half of the entire quantity of wool imported into Great Britain, this is of serious consequence, and must influence the home market.

“Although gold in large quantities finds its way here from Victoria, it nearly all goes back again, owing to the determination of our banks not to allow purchasers of gold to draw against shipments of this article. The consequence is, that all the diggers who have returned to the colony, however much inclined to remain here and invest their earnings, are soon obliged to leave us again when they find that their gold-dust and nuggets have no exchangeable value with us. This has produced the most baneful effects on business. Our merchants and tradesmen have been petitioning and remonstrating with the Governor,

praying to have some kind of an assay office established, where an exchangeable value might be given to the gold, by converting it into ingots of a certain value, which would circulate as other coin. Although this petition met with a cool reception, it is now all but certain that it will be granted in some modified form; nothing else could save this colony from the verge of utter ruin—for a length of time at least—though eventually we have little to fear but that we shall find South Australia in a better position than ever, owing to the many advantages she has over the other colonies in her mines and agricultural productions.

“All practical geologists are struck with the similarity of our auriferous indications to those of Bathurst and Mount Alexander. Probably at some future period gold will be found here in equal abundance.

“Quotations for all kinds of merchandise are nominal, with nothing doing but for actual requirements, the greater part of our usual imports being now unsaleable; and nearly all shipments coming here are transshipped to Melbourne. Although, whilst penning this, an enactment has been passed by our Legislative Council declaring gold a legal tender in this province at the rate of seventy-one shillings an ounce, still we cannot expect any improvement

in business for the next twelve months at least. Extensive failures are of almost daily occurrence under the existing and unforeseen pressure of the times. Our banks are determined to act liberally to all their customers. Merchants and tradesmen are following the same rule towards each other. It is anticipated that this mutual forbearance between man and man will after some lapse of time restore confidence, when every branch of trade will resume its wonted tone of health and vigour, and much of the wealth produced by the gold diggings will find its way for investment to this colony, where every luxury and necessary of life may be produced and enjoyed in peace.

“After the present crisis is over, and confidence has been again restored, South Australia will experience a flow of wealth and prosperity unexampled either in present or past times by any colony acknowledging the sway of the British empire.”

## CHAPTER III.

THE COLONY OF VICTORIA, ITS EARLY HISTORY, AND RAPID DEVELOPMENT—THE CITY OF MELBOURNE, AND THE TOWN OF GEELONG—THE PASTORAL DISTRICTS—CAPABILITIES OF THE COLONY.

IN the voyage out, as described in the first chapter, the journey terminated at the city of Adelaide, the capital of South Australia; but had the destination of our ship been Port Phillip, she would have taken a different course, and instead of wearing to the north for the Gulf of St. Vincent, would have continued to steer eastward till she reached Bass's Strait; bearing then to the northward, the land would come in sight on our left hand, and as we rapidly advanced, Cape Schank would soon make its appearance on the right, and our course would then lie between shores that stretched away on either side, bold and high and everywhere surmounted by the evergreen forest that thence stretched inland. In the distance ahead the land gradually closes in to a narrow inlet, forming apparently the bottom of

a deep and dangerous gulf, as the furious surf with which it was lined would lead us to believe. On a nearer approach, however, the rocky coast in front is seen to be parted by an opening whose smooth waters proclaim it to be the entrance to some inner haven. The contracted passage which thus comes into view so unexpectedly serves to separate two promontories scarcely three miles apart at the points nearest to each other: that on the west is called Point Lonsdale; while the other, Point Nepean, is a long strip of rocks and sand. Upon rounding the latter, we are at once shut out from the open sea, and transferred to the threshold of a magnificent bay. Port Phillip Bay, into which we have thus passed, is certainly one of the noblest of its kind; in reality it is an inland sea of considerable extent, about forty miles in length by thirty in breadth, along whose winding shores are to be found many inlets and bays, each one capable of sheltering whole fleets, the most conspicuous of which is the Bay of Geelong, a fine expanse of water running deep into its western shore, and called, from its extreme beauty, "the second Bay of Naples." At the upper extremity of the lake lies Hobson's Bay, the port of the city of Melbourne, which is the capital of that splendid pastoral country, formerly a district of New South Wales called

the Port Phillip District, but now the independent colony of Victoria.

Our knowledge of the existence of the Bay or Lake of Port Phillip is due to Lieut. Murray, of the *Lady Nelson*, who ascertained its existence in carrying out a series of exploring expeditions projected by Governor King. The description by the discoverer of the portion which he beheld, and especially of the shore, written, as it was, about fifty years ago, might nevertheless be copied by the traveller of to-day without a word of alteration, so exactly does it convey the principal features by which the surrounding locality is marked:—"The southern shore of this noble harbour is bold high land in general, and not clothed, as all the land of Western Port is, with thick brush, but with stout trees of various kinds; and in some places falls nothing short in beauty of appearance to Greenwich Park. Away to the eastward, at the distance of about twenty miles, the land is mountainous. There is one very high mountain in particular which in the meantime I named Arthur's Seat, from its resemblance to a mountain of that name near Edinburgh." Subsequently the enterprising Flinders made an accurate survey, and the report which he brought back was so favourably received as to induce the Government, about a couple of years



afterwards, to choose it as a place for the establishment of a penal settlement. The spot, however, selected for the purpose was (fortunately) the worst within a wide circuit; it was upon Point Nepean, the headland of which, running out from the east, parts the bay in that direction from the sea. On further trial nothing was found to counteract its many disadvantages; water could only be procured at that point by digging wells in the sand, a source, however abundant at the time, far too limited to supply a growing population. The country in the immediate neighbourhood showed no prospect of being properly cultivated, and at the same time, no vigilance could prevent the convicts from making their escape to the woods. Governor Collins therefore abandoned his original purpose, and set sail for Van Diemen's Land, and landing there on the shores of one of the finest bays in the world, laid the foundations of Hobart Town.

For many years subsequent to this attempt, the magnificent country of Port Phillip continued undisturbed by the foot of a white man; for of the many exploring parties sent out by private individuals, as well as by the Government of New South Wales, none followed the road to Port Phillip; probably deterred by the unfavourable circumstances under which the first

expedition quitted it. In the year 1824, however, Messrs. Hovell and Hume, two influential settlers in the Sydney district, determined upon attempting to reach the abandoned settlement overland. The account of their journey affords one a tolerable idea of the difficulties of inland exploration, and of the indomitable energy required to overcome them. Their travelling equipage, at the commencement of their journey, consisted of two carts, containing supplies, drawn by four bullocks; these were accompanied by six men, each armed with a fowling-piece; and the two horses ridden by themselves, with a spare horse, completed their outfit. Departing from Lake George, they left the last trace of civilization behind, and entered at once into the wide expanse of an unknown interior, guided only by a small compass and the calculations made with an imperfect sextant.

At the distance of eleven miles they met the Murrumbidgee. This stream, thirty or forty yards wide, presented in its swollen waters a bar to their further progress for the space of two days; after which, finding delay useless, they contrived to form a punt out of one of the carts, by tying a tarpauling tightly round the bottom of the vehicle. From this point, having transported themselves and their goods dry and in safety to the opposite shore, they pursued

a W.S.W. course for four days, when, from the mountainous character of the country before them, it was judged advisable to abandon the carts and such quantities of the provisions as could most easily be spared, concealing them till their return. From this hastily constructed dépôt they advanced for seventy miles over difficult ranges, precipitous ravines, and opposing streams, relieved at intervals by strips of lightly wooded pastoral grounds, until they came suddenly and unexpectedly in view of a belt of stupendous mountains,—the Australian Alps. Here their course was necessarily altered a few points to the westward, to enable them to avoid the diverging branches of this enormous chain; and after a journey of eighty-five miles, they discovered a river (the Hume), the breadth of which could not have been less than eighty yards. Two or three days were spent on the banks of this beautiful stream, in the endeavour to find a convenient crossing-place. Pursuing their course, they came, at the distance of thirty-four miles, to another, though much smaller river, which they called the “Ovens;” crossing which, they altered the course of their route to a more southerly direction, and at the distance of 109 miles they met with and crossed a fourth river, the Hovell (the Golbourn of Major Mitchell). The region passed over be-

tween these last two rivers had presented a very favourable aspect, being enriched with fertile plains, open or park-like forests, and numerous streams. The land contiguous to the Hovell was found to be of a quality fitted for every purpose, pastoral and agricultural.

The passage of this stream accomplished, they continued their journey in a S.W. direction, through an agreeable and picturesque country, the soil good and the grass abundant, for eight days, when they were checked by the rugged, stony surface of a mountain they attempted to cross, and the dense and impenetrable nature of its brushwood and jungle grass. To this mountain they gave the name of Mount Disappointment; and, baffled in their attempt to find a breach in the rocky rampart which it formed across their path, they turned their steps, with the intention of passing round its flank. This they accomplished by making a long and tedious detour in a westerly direction; and then once more resuming their proper course, finally received the reward of all their toils by descriing the sea in the distance.

In thus bringing their attempts to a successful close, they had spent two months of hardship, of the severity of which none but those who enter these solitudes can form a conception, and had travelled a distance of 378 miles,

reckoning in a straight line from the point of their departure. It was the misfortune of these energetic explorers, to have been guided by their anxiety to take the shortest and most direct route, and not that which presented the fewest impediments, and they thus entangled themselves amidst the lofty lateral ranges which the Australian Alps throw off to the westward. Times without number they had to climb with weary steps to the summit of a ridge, only to see "Alps beyond Alps" rising in the distance across their course, while on other occasions broad streams and dense jungles opposed scarcely less formidable barriers to their advance.

The road thus opened was seen to be practicable for man, though at the cost of immense labour; but it was far otherwise with regard to sheep and cattle, and no one at all acquainted with the difficulties of conveying these, especially in large numbers, through a wooded and mountainous region, would willingly pursue a track beset with so many obstacles. The expedition, therefore, was followed by no practical results, and the district of Port Phillip once more relapsed into obscurity.

The unexampled rapidity, however, with which the available land in Van Diemen's Land (situated immediately opposite to that part of the coast of Australia) had been occupied, and

the necessity of finding new tracts of land for pastoral purposes, soon induced the colonists of that island to turn their attention to the advantage of establishing a settlement in a district so proximate and accessible to them; and with this view an association was formed, which, in the month of May, 1835, despatched Mr. Batman as an agent to open up a friendly intercourse with the aborigines, and, if successful, to effect a purchase of as much land as it was possible to procure; and this gentleman succeeded in obtaining the consent of the aboriginal chiefs, the three brothers, "Jagajaga, Jagajaga, and Jagajaga," to assign by deed (of the legal beauties of which they must have been excellent critics) a tract of land of about 600,000 acres, the present value of which is almost incalculable, "for and in consideration of" about 40 pairs of blankets, 130 knives, 40 tomahawks, 40 looking-glasses, 40 pairs of scissors, 12 red shirts, 4 flannel jackets, 4 suits of clothes, 150 pounds of flour, 250 handkerchiefs, and half a dozen shirts, and an annual tribute of two tons of flour, and another "assorted collection" of knives, tomahawks, scissors, looking-glasses, &c., but making the proportion of handkerchiefs to shirts a little more equal. The treaty, however, was not destined to be carried out, for the government refused to recognise it, as

they considered it subversive of the sovereignty which the Crown asserted over the ceded territory; and the natives were thus deprived of the opportunity of becoming acquainted with the excellence of our Sheffield cutlery, or of contemplating their beauties in any other mirrors than those natural ones which their own streams and "water holes" presented to them.

But though compelled to relinquish their position as proprietors, the association were not inclined to abandon a country so valuable, and they therefore began to occupy the land as unlicensed squatters; and such was the eagerness with which their fellow settlers in Van Diemen's Land appreciated the district, so soon as the veil which had shrouded its real merits had been drawn aside, that within twelve months the infant settlement had risen to the status of a village: gardens had been formed; about fifty acres of rich land prepared for tillage; thirty-five vessels had arrived, principally conveying live stock from Van Diemen's Land; the population amounted to upwards of two hundred; the number of sheep amounted to 20,000; and the country in the interior had been located to the distance of fifty miles.

This settlement, from its very commencement, exhibits a spectacle not to be found in the records of any other colony with which we

are acquainted. Its founders not only carried with them their own servants and their own food—all, in short, that was necessary to their existence—but in the immense numbers of sheep transported, they conveyed the elements of a wealth at once boundless and self-productive. With a fair wind, a vessel may run over from Launceston to Port Phillip in twenty-four hours, and this easy and rapid communication gave to Port Phillip all the advantages of a mother country, as it were, within that distance, from which every aid might be furnished as soon as demanded.

The rapid progress of the settlement soon attracted the attention of the Sydney government, and Sir Richard Bourke despatched a police magistrate, accompanied by a small surveying staff, to lay the foundations of a local government; and to the personal exertions and sound views of this enlightened governor the colony owes a deep debt of gratitude. In May 1837 he proceeded in person to the settlement, and laid out the plans of two towns, to which were given the names of Melbourne and Geelong; and before the month of August in the following year, so rapid had been its progress, as to render it impossible for the memory to keep pace with the movement. Brick buildings were numerous, some boasting of two and three



stories; little inns were transformed into handsome and commodious hotels; the lines of streets had been cleared, marked, and in some instances were undergoing a process of macadamization; branches of two Sydney banks were in active operation; the population had quadrupled; the country in the interior was occupied to a distance of 120 miles, and the settlers were still pushing on to regions yet more remote; and in the month of October following, the first newspaper was published, under the title of the *Port Phillip Gazette*. Thus, in less than two years and a half from the time when the rich plains of Port Phillip were untrodden save by the foot of their aboriginal natives, or their verdure disturbed except by the leap of the kangaroo, the Saxon energy had planted all the elements of modern civilization, which had not only taken root, but were flourishing in full vigour.

It is not within our limits to trace the history of the colony through all its rapid phases. We will therefore pass over a period of fourteen years of rapid development, and by an extract from the *Melbourne Herald* we shall convey, perhaps, by force of contrast, a better idea of the progress which the colony had made during that period than by a more lengthened description:—

“Yesterday, July 15, 1851, the first important epoch in our new-born colony was observed as a sort of gala-day in Melbourne, and from an early hour it was evident, from the closed shops and appearance of the citizens, that the hour when at length, after long and harassing years of expectation, their adopted country would be officially declared free, was looked forward to with heartfelt interest. According to previous notification, his Honour the late Superintendent would be sworn in to the public offices at eleven o'clock, and as that hour approached, groups might be seen hurrying towards the spot to witness the ceremonial. At the appointed time there could not have been less than two thousand persons in the area fronting the government buildings, whilst the upper windows of the edifice were crowded with ladies, who manifested just as much curiosity, and perhaps a little more, to have a peep at the proceedings as the other portion of the community.

“The police and military shortly arrived, and filed in square, and some pieces of artillery were placed in an adjacent position to boom forth at the proper season the joyful intelligence. Just at eleven o'clock the new governor, C. J. Latrobe, Esq., appeared in the porch of the building, attended by the resident Judge, the newly appointed Attorney-general, and all

the principal officials, the Bishop of Melbourne, the Archdeacon of Geelong, and others of the clergy, and various members of the deputations appointed to wait upon his Excellency with addresses of congratulation.

“ E. Bell, Esq., the Lieutenant-governor's private secretary and aide-de-camp, proceeded to read the commission of the Queen appointing Sir Charles FitzRoy the Captain-general and Governor-in-chief of the Australasian colonies; and next, the commission appointing Charles Joseph La Trobe, Esq. Lieutenant-governor of the colony of Victoria.

“ The oaths of office were then read over to his Excellency by W. F. Stawell, Esq., the newly appointed Attorney-general, and duly subscribed in the presence of his Honour the resident Judge.

“ Captain Lonsdale next read the proclamation of the Lieutenant-governor appointing his executive council. As he commenced, a discharge of artillery commenced also, and continued at intervals until eleven guns were fired. The national anthem followed, by the Sax Horn Band, the multitude remaining uncovered. This concluded the ceremony of inauguration.

“ The first levee of the first Governor of Victoria was held at two P.M., at which upwards of 450 visitors were present; and the

day's proceedings were concluded by a ball at the Benevolent Asylum, which was attended by all the rank and fashion of Melbourne. The road from the city was lighted all the way, and lined with policemen. The next morning the proclamation and notices of the various official and judicial appointments, &c. were published in a Supplement to the *Government Gazette*."

Now, although at first sight this appears to be a very ordinary newspaper paragraph, it is in reality pregnant with information; for it informs us that within the short space of sixteen years, a settlement founded by a few squatters from Van Diemen's Land had progressed so rapidly that its principal city could furnish a crowd of two thousand people as mere spectators at a fête day; that it had also contrived to augment its population to a sufficient extent that the usual divisions of society in the Old World were already fully apparent, as evidenced in the presentation of 450 visitors to the representative of her Majesty; that the city was furnished with its properly organized police, and that the constituted authorities were duly supported by the presence of "the military;" that its ecclesiastical affairs had been so carefully attended to as to have ensured the superintendence of a bishop, and that its second

town of importance had its archdeacon; that there were a variety of interests or classes, sufficiently distinct and important to appoint each their deputations: and, in fine, that in that short space of time this "Port Phillip district of the colony of New South Wales" had already attained an equal rank with the parent colony, which had had a start of half a century.

Nor was this equality of rank merely an official one, for we learn by statistics that in 1849, viz. two years previously, the number of sheep in the squatting localities of the two colonies was as near equal as possible; and at the present time, without the slightest assistance from the government, or the advantage of a systematic puffing by any public company, the colony of Victoria contains nearly 100,000 inhabitants, seven or eight millions of sheep, and more than half a million of horned cattle. The quantity of wool exported is greater than from New South Wales, and the colonists are in the enjoyment of a very high degree of prosperity. And, to complete the picture, we may add that the colony has not only been a self-supporting one from the first, having never cost the mother country a single shilling, but has attained this position in spite of the greatest opposition on the part of the government.

Lord Glenelg, the then colonial minister, opposed the Port Phillip colony in the most determined manner, in spite of the urgent remonstrances of Sir R. Bourke (whose important services we have mentioned) and of Colonel Arthur, the Governor of Van Diemen's Land ; and had the colony not been at a distance of sixteen thousand miles from Lord Glenelg's bureau in Downing-street, the settlers would have been driven back by force of arms. As it was, the colonists beat the minister, and firmly established a new colony, whilst he was waiting the reply to his despatch for its prevention.

Let us now take a glance at the general features of the colony, as they present themselves to us at the present time. The Port Phillip Bay is one of the most magnificent harbours in the world, and would afford safe anchorage for the whole mercantile navy of England. The width of the entrance at the Heads of Port Phillip is about two miles ; and the entrance passed, the shores recede away on either side so as to give it an immense width. About half-way up, it throws out an arm to the westward, which is about ten miles wide at the mouth, and which, from its extreme beauty, has been denominated "the second Bay of Naples." This arm or inlet is the Bay of Geelong ;

and the extreme width of the Port Phillip Bay at this point, from east to west, cannot be less than about forty miles. The land again begins to trend in from this point as we proceed northerly; and towards the extremity of the harbour, a peninsula runs out into the gulf from the western shore, to the northward of which is Hobson's Bay, where we may notice a fleet of vessels of all sizes lying quietly at anchor, and shipping their cargoes of that important staple of the district, wool. Into a narrow prolongation of Hobson's Bay, and at a distance from the Heads of about forty miles, the Yarra Yarra river discharges its everflowing waters.

On the peninsula above-mentioned, to the south of Hobson's Bay, is built the township of Williamstown, which was originally intended (by Sir Richard Bourke) as the capital of the colony. It was by no means an unwise selection, although circumstances conspired to prevent this township from obtaining that dignity. It is close to the shipping, from which Melbourne is distant seven or eight miles by water, although not so much by land. The extent of the site is amply sufficient for a large city, and it is surrounded by water on three sides; and the situation would unquestionably have been as salubrious as commanding. The only ob-

jection to it was the want of fresh water on the spot, which, although a serious difficulty, was not one of so fatal a character as should have prevented the accomplishment of the intention of its founder. There are many large and important towns, both in Europe and America, which have to resort to artificial means for their supplies of fresh water; and had the town been fairly established, there would have been neither engineering difficulty nor lack of means experienced in bringing an efficient supply from the Yarra Yarra. As it was, however, Melbourne, intended by Sir Richard Bourke as a mere country village some distance inland, has usurped the place which Williamstown was intended to occupy, and the Melbourne merchants are exposed to the expense and delay arising from a transshipment of goods from Hobson's Bay to the Yarra Yarra, (the bar at the mouth not allowing large vessels to pass,) and to various other inconveniences which would have been avoided had the original intention been accomplished.

The city of Melbourne, the present capital of the colony of Victoria, and the seat of a bishopric, is situated on the banks of the Yarra Yarra. It has a municipal charter, its local affairs being directed by a mayor, four aldermen, and twelve town-councillors. Its principal



streets are a hundred feet in width, and are mostly at right angles with each other; although, to the disgrace of the surveyors, there are a large number of narrow lanes, while squares, circuses, and other ornamental open spaces, which add so greatly to the healthiness as well as beauty of a city, have been almost entirely forgotten. There are churches, banks, and government buildings, of an ornamental character, and the shops and warehouses are not inferior to any in the Australian metropolis. In last year, there were not less than nine new places of worship in course of erection. There is a Mechanics' Institution and a Theatre; and among the commercial buildings there are two steam-mills, seven breweries, one boiling-down establishment, one blacking manufactory, three iron and two brass foundries. At a late sale in Swanston-street, the prices of land ranged from 6*l.* 10*s.* to 20*l.* per *foot* frontage; and as the price was not a mere speculative one, it serves to indicate in the strongest manner the rapid progress of the city. In the suburbs there is a botanic garden and a race-course; and connecting the city with South Melbourne there is a magnificent stone bridge, called Prince's-bridge, having but a single arch of 150 feet span, erected at a cost of 15,000*l.*

To describe the appearance of this flourishing

city by mere words would be impossible, and the pencil has therefore been called in requisition here to aid the pen in conveying some idea of the aspect of the city of Melbourne.



MELBOURNE.

There are four daily newspapers published in the city, and two weekly papers; and the following summary of the wealth and population of the colony is from the census taken last year:—

## POPULATION FOR 1851.

Melbourne . . . . .	23,143	
County Bourke . . . . .	18,348	
		<hr/>
		41,491
Geelong . . . . .	8,227	
Country Grant . . . . .	4,469	
		<hr/>
		12,696
Estimated total of the remainder of the province . . . . .	21,813	
		<hr/>
		75,000
		<hr/>

## LAND.

Land sold . . . . .	£710,000
Improvements, at 100 per cent. . . . .	710,000
9,000 tenements, at 250 <i>l</i> . . . . .	2,200,000
	<hr/>
	£3,620,000
	<hr/>

## Stock, 1850.

Sheep, 5,318,046, at 10 <i>s</i> . . . . .	£2,659,023
Cattle, 346,562, at 20 <i>s</i> . . . . .	346,562
Horses, 16,743, at 60 <i>s</i> . . . . .	50,229
1,200 stations, chattels, &c. &c. at 200 <i>l</i> . . . . .	240,000
	<hr/>
	3,295,814
Increase of stock since 1850 . . . . .	306,870
	<hr/>
	£3,602,684
	<hr/>

The situation of the city of Melbourne is decidedly good; and the beautiful green appearance of the hills on which it is built, with a picturesque and never-failing river flowing in front of them, must have appeared peculiarly attractive to the first settlers from Van

Diemen's Land. The country around the town is rather of a light soil, and thinly wooded; but the wood is generally of that umbrageous and ornamental character which reminds one of the park scenery of the mother country, and is altogether unlike the tall, naked stems that shoot up their uninteresting forms in the thick forests around Sydney. But the principal source of attraction near Melbourne is the Yarra Yarra river, whose banks are studded with picturesque and beautiful villas for miles and miles above the town. The name of the river signifies, in the aboriginal language, "ever flowing," and justly deserves the title, inasmuch as its current of fresh water has never been known to fail. It displays to us the characteristics of an Australian river in its abrupt banks, more resembling those of a canal constructed by the hand of art than one of those streams of similar size in the home country, which nature has furnished with beautiful pebbly shelving banks. Its source is in one of the spurs of the Snowy Mountains. Its ordinary depth for a considerable distance above Melbourne is eight or ten feet, and it is from two to two and a half chains in breadth. Occasionally, in parts of its upper course, its bed is traversed by a ridge of sandstone or other soft rock, and, as it approaches the

vicinity of Melbourne and its estuary, by dykes of trap or iron-stone, the most elevated and striking of which occurs at the head of the basin at Melbourne. At this point, in ordinary times of the tide, the fresh water mingles with that of the bay, which is about eight miles distant.

Below the point where the river Plenty enters the Yarra, the high banks of the latter are found to border occasional flats, or low undulating grounds, of various extent, composed of very rich alluvial soil; in the other portions of its course from the above point, the river will be seen to be confined within its deep bed at the foot of steep sandstone hills, or somewhat elevated flats of honeycomb land, sprinkled with trap boulders. The valley of the Yarra so called may be said to terminate at Melbourne. At this point the bluff land retires on either hand, and gives place to a wide tract of country, composed partly of low marsh, but very slightly raised above the level of the high tides, and partly of low, undulating, sandy rises, through which the Yarra and Salt Water river take their course to their junction with the sea. From the whole of this level the sea has doubtless retired, leaving the original coast line exceedingly well defined in the steep, scarped banks which bound the low land for many miles.

At the distance of four miles from Melbourne in a direct line, although perhaps more than twice that distance by the windings of the river, the Yarra receives as a tributary from the northward the Nierri creek; at four or five miles further, it receives the Darabin creek; and at six miles beyond the latter stream, the river Plenty. These are all mountain streams, or rather torrents, that rise in the Mount Macedon range, and pursue a southerly course till they fall into the Yarra Yarra. There is a large quantity of excellent land on the banks of these tributaries, although in general it is well wooded, and rather thickly covered with rocks, evidently of volcanic origin, and have been carried down by torrents from the extinct volcanoes of that part of the territory. The soil is a rich black mould, and is excellently adapted for the growth of the vine, and of all descriptions of European fruit-trees.

The country around Melbourne is designated the district of Bourke, which is bounded to the westward by the Weiraby river, which rises in the Buninyong range of mountains, and falls into Port Phillip Bay near the opening to the Bay of Geelong; and to the eastward, the district extends towards Western Port by the Dandenong range; including, therefore, the Mount Macedon country to the north of

Melbourne, at a distance of thirty to forty miles.

A considerable portion of the road to Mount Macedon traverses what are called sheep downs, a comparatively level tract of country, but gently undulating, the soil being light and dry, and producing excellent pasture for sheep. Towards Mount Macedon the trees become more numerous, although over the downs they are but thinly scattered. These trees are generally a variety of *casuarinæ*, commonly called *she-oak* by the colonists, which genus of tree is most abundantly found over the whole district. They are not found growing in thick and dense forests or natural plantations, but scattered thinly, either singly or in clumps, giving to the land the beautiful appearance of an English park, except as to extent, which in many places would far exceed the limits of an English county. The leaves of this tree are shaped somewhat similar to a packing needle; and when the wind sighs softly through their foliage, they produce a kind of melancholy sound, giving the idea of the rolling of the surf on a distant beach, sometimes so vividly as to induce the traveller, when far inland, to glance round the horizon in the expectation of finding the waters of the ocean within his view; and occasionally this dull sound will be varied, from the strength of

the wind, so as to produce as it were all kinds of beautiful tones, and induce us to feel that we are indeed walking amidst a grove of Nature's own *Æolian* harps.

A more picturesque and beautiful region than that near Mount Macedon can scarcely be conceived. The whole country has a delicately smooth, lawn-like surface, without scrub or stones, studded with small groups of these she-oaks, with their rich brown silky foliage; further off, bounding the plain, there are knolls, slopes, and glens, all of the smoothest outline, crowned or sprinkled with the same trees; and, beyond, mountains and mountain ranges, tinged with the delicious blue of the summer heavens. Some of these mountains are wooded to the summits; others reveal through their openings immeasurable plains, with myriads of sheep whitely dotting the landscape, or herds of stately cattle browsing on the richest pastures in the world; whilst glimpses of golden sunshine, lighting up the features of the landscape, and casting long shadows from the trees under which the flocks cluster occasionally for shelter from the rays, render the scene one of the most ravishing enchantment.

Second in importance to Melbourne is the town of Geelong, situated on the shores of the bay, or inlet, of that name which branches from



the western side of the Port Phillip Bay. It is at a distance of about forty-five miles from Melbourne, and twice or thrice a-day excellent steamers convey goods and passengers from one town to the other in a few hours.

The Bay of Geelong is navigable for large vessels as far up as Point Henry on the southern shore, about six miles from the harbour of Geelong. From that point, however, a bar or shoal stretches across to the opposite shore. On this bar there is only nine feet of water at high tide, which compels large vessels to anchor on the outside of the bar, and entails the expense and inconvenience of loading or unloading them at that distance from the town. It is the opinion of practical men, however, that there will be no great difficulty or expense in removing this bar, in which case it is highly probable that Geelong would progress with such rapidity as to render it a rival to the city of Melbourne for the honour of being the capital of the colony. The bay is remarkably picturesque, and the situation of the town decidedly one of the best in Australia for a great commercial city.

Corio is the native name for the beach at Geelong, the latter term belonging properly to the inlet or harbour. The Barwon river passes Geelong on its tortuous course to the ocean;

and there is a natural terrace on each side of the river, parallel to its banks, which was probably the ancient sea-beach when the level of the land was considerably lower, and all the low ground under water. After passing Geelong to the left, the river, which in this part of its course is a beautiful stream, pursues a southeasterly course, nearly parallel to the Bay of Geelong, towards the great Southern Ocean. About nine or ten miles below Barrangoop, it spreads out into a series of picturesque lakes, variegated with islands, where multitudes of black swans and other waterfowl, in numbers almost countless, formerly sailed quietly along their silent surface, but which soon bid fair, before the destroying hand of man, to become *raræ aves* indeed.

The peninsula included between the Barwon river and the Bay of Geelong, about twenty-five miles in length, containing probably near 200,000 acres, consists principally of land of the finest quality, whether for pasturage or cultivation. It appears to be a continuation of the same tract of level country that stretches along for upwards of two hundred miles to the westward of Geelong, between the coast range, or Marrack Hills, and the ranges of the interior.

The town of Geelong has, like Melbourne, its places of worship, its wide streets, its public

buildings, fine shops and warehouses, its news papers, and all other appliances of modern civilization; but as one pictorial sketch conveys a better idea than a hundred pages of description, we subjoin a view of the town, merely



GEELONG.

premising that its progress has been so rapid that even a single month is almost sufficient to produce most important variations in its appearance.

Immediately to the westward of Geelong there is much fine land and beautifully picturesque scenery, in what are called the Barrabool Hills, consisting apparently of decomposed trap rock, and presenting the most fertile soil to their very summits. All descriptions of European roots, fruits, vegetables, and grain thrive and flourish luxuriantly. The land is naturally so lightly timbered that the plough can be thrust into the rich chocolate-coloured soil in every direction without any previous preparation as regards felling the trees. Indeed, were it not for the shelter they afford to the parrots and cockatoos, which destroy the grain, their extreme beauty in the landscape would almost induce one to spare even those which occur in the midst of the cultivated fields.

A larger quantity of wool is exported from Geelong than from Melbourne, and a larger quantity from the colony of Victoria than from the older one of New South Wales. In fact, the rich pastoral districts of this colony not only led to its first establishment, but have ever continued to be its distinguishing feature. It must be a matter of earnest hope that the present preeminence of the colony also as regards the abundance of gold, will not interfere to prevent the continued development of its resources as regards this intrinsically more

valuable production. The prospects of the pastoral farmers for the present year are certainly of the most discouraging character. The rich prizes which the auriferous soil confers in such abundance upon its workers, seems to have acted with magnetic force upon every class of the community; and whilst the earnings of a whole year can so frequently be obtained by the labour of a single week, it is not surprising that all classes should endeavour to participate; and although sooner or later such a disproportionate application of labour must tend to cure itself, that reflection by no means tends to render those whose wool may be perishing on the backs of the sheep for want of shearers, or whose crops may be rotting on the ground for want of hands to wield the sickle, better satisfied with the existing condition of things. Unless the great body of gold miners should themselves be seized with a fit of reflection, and determine upon a short patriotic secession from the search after the precious metal, in order that the colonies may not run the risk of losing their hard-earned position as the chief wool-growers in the world, we can see but little hope for those who seem at present doomed within a few months to stand idly gazing, Tantalus like, at millions of "golden fleeces," without being able to collect them.

There is a wide difference between an agricultural and a pastoral farmer. The former is most frequently the proprietor of the land he cultivates, while the latter is no more than a "licensed squatter," a tenant at will to the Crown, liable to be dispossessed of his land the moment a purchaser of it may appear. At the present time, and for many years to come, it will be impossible that this should be otherwise. The large quantity of land required for pastoral purposes completely forbids the idea of purchasing it. There are some large sheep-owners who occupy perhaps as much as twelve thousand acres of land, which, at the Government price, would cost as many pounds, and the mere interest on the money would probably absorb nearly the whole amount which the wool itself would produce; and when we recollect that there are some six millions of sheep in the colony of Victoria, requiring for pasturage from twelve to eighteen millions of acres, we shall see at a glance that it would be simply impossible for the land to be purchased, even although the returns were much greater.

It is mainly to the exertions of the "squatters" that we are indebted for the great extent of land which has been explored and occupied. Having fixed upon a tract of land suitable for pastoral purposes, the squatter pays his licence-

fee of ten pounds for liberty to occupy his land for a year, he places his stock upon it, and continues for a few years paying an annual visit to the metropolis to dispose of his wool, pay his annual licence-fee, and purchase stores for the ensuing year; amusing himself as best he can in his chosen solitude. But new-comers are ever arriving, and the land round his station is gradually occupied, until no more remains available without the labour and privations of a new exploration to still more remote portions of the interior. The capitalist, fresh from home, and scarcely yet reconciled even to a "life in the bush," hesitates to enter upon this task, and looks round for some one who will be willing to part with his established location, for a "consideration." Our old squatter, of course, cannot sell his run, having no title to the land; but he sells the sheep which are upon it, at an advanced price per head, in consideration of relinquishing his claim and his licence to occupy the land, to the purchaser. He then yokes his bullocks to his dray, having stored it with provisions, and placed in it his gun and some ammunition, mounts his horse, and, with his compass in his pocket, sallies forth, soon leaving the last trace of civilization behind him, and, like a minor Columbus, proceeds on his way to discover a new (pastoral) world. After having

had, perhaps, to cut his way through tangled brushwood at the rate of a mile or two per day, and to spend day after day upon the banks of some stream before he can find a fording-place, perhaps having to leave his bullock-dray for a while and scale awkward hills, in order, if possible, to discover the best way of finding



SHEEP STATION, PORT PHILLIP.

a practicable road through them, he at length comes in sight of a piece of open country whose expansive downs promise him the wished-for pasturage, and whose magnificent meadows are



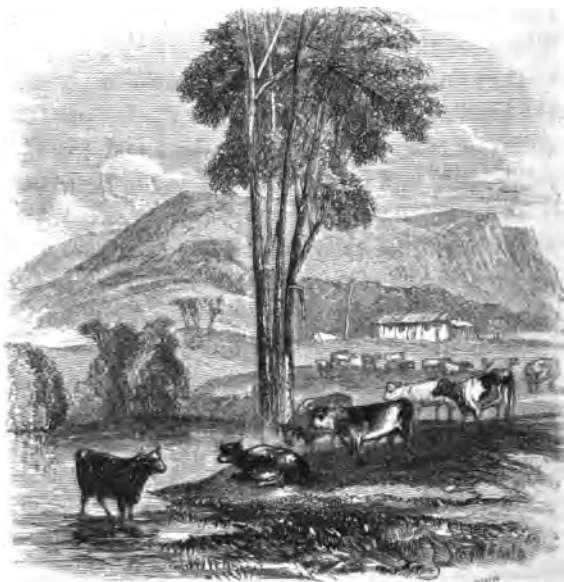
watered by some clear winding stream, with its frequent water-holes, to ensure an ample supply if the stream itself should chance to fail. Having taken a note of its landmarks, he retraces his steps; and making his way to the Government Commissioner, pays his 10% for leave to occupy his newly-discovered land, purchases his stock, engages his shepherds, and proceeds to people the yet untrodden pastures with myriads of sheep, whose white fleeces dotting the beautiful green valleys, alter at once the character of the scene, and from a solitary wild convert it into one of the loveliest pictures which nature and civilization together can present to the eye.

The above illustration will serve to convey some idea of the appearance of one of those sheep stations which we have just been describing. The sketch was taken in the beautiful Valley of the Goulburn. The plain so called is about fifteen miles in length, with an average breadth of eight miles, and bears traces of having, at some remote period, formed the bed of a lake, and the ridges that run out into it from either side have all the character and appearance of headlands. The stones with which it is covered in some spots, or which are found by excavation, consist of quartz pebbles, rolled stones and shingle, as if from the sea-beach or bed of a river. There is a series of plains of this character, more or less of alluvial formation, along a large extent

of the mountainous portion of Eastern Australia; the general elevation of these plains being about two thousand feet above the level of the sea. There are the Goulburn and Breadalbane plains to the south, the Bathurst plains to the west, and the Darling downs to the north; the last-named series of plains being a hundred and twenty miles long, and from thirty to forty in breadth.

It is not only to sheep, however, that the squatters direct their attention; cattle are also an equal object of their solicitude; but as regards the latter, it will not do to change a station so often as in the case of sheep. You may remove sheep from one station to another as often as you think proper, as they will feed contentedly anywhere; besides which, they are never left unattended, and at night are invariably confined by hurdles. But the cattle have a peculiar attachment to the place to which they have been accustomed, and require at least six months to reconcile them to a new one. They have been known to find their way to the place where they had been bred, over a distance of three hundred miles. Great care is therefore necessary in selecting a station which possesses sufficient space, sufficient food, and sufficient water to render it unnecessary to remove for many years. The cattle station, the sketch of which is subjoined, is not many miles from the sheep station represented in the previous illustration.

The preeminence of the Colony of Victoria, however, is not confined to its capabilities as



CATTLE STATION, PORT PHILLIP.

regards pasturage. It has not only surpassed the main colony in the rapidity of its progress, the beauty of its scenery, the excellence of its land, and the exports of its staple produce, but it has also left it far behind in its yield of the precious metal, gold. The subject of this latter discovery we have reserved to a special chapter, in which it will receive due consideration. But the mineral riches of the colony are not restricted

to gold alone, for evidence has been discovered of the existence of other metals, which when the gold is either exhausted, or its collection attended with such difficulty as to render it no longer a subject of more than ordinary interest or excitement, will form a no less valuable source of wealth and prosperity as regards the ultimate progress of the colony. Copper ore has been found quite equal to that from the Burra Burra; samples of plumbago and of lead ore have also been obtained; and we have also specimens of that scarce metal, platina, which is likely, from its greater rarity, to become even more valuable than gold itself. Last but not least, we may announce that that inestimable mineral, coal, without which our knowledge of all the others would be nearly useless, has been discovered in abundance within a few miles of the city of Melbourne.

We may observe, in conclusion, with regard to this colony, that from all the appearances connected with it, from the rapidity of its progress, the salubrity of its climate, the fertility of its soil, the richness of its pastures, the beauty of its scenery, the excellence of its position, and the variety and abundance of its mineral treasures, it appears destined at no very distant date to become the most important portion of the Australian continent, and the first in value and interest of all the colonial possessions of the British Crown.

## CHAPTER IV.

THE COLONY OF NEW SOUTH WALES—THE HARBOUR OF PORT JACKSON—THE CITY OF SYDNEY—THE PARAMATTA RIVER—THE GENERAL FEATURES, AND PRESENT CONDITION OF THE COLONY.

IT was on the morning of the 26th day of January, 1788, that the first settlement in this the oldest colony in Australia was founded under Captain Phillip, after he had quitted the less favourable station at Botany Bay. "The spot chosen for encampment," says Colonel Collins, in his interesting account of the settlement, "was at the head of the cove near the run of fresh water which stole silently along through a very thick wood, the stillness of which had then, for the first time since the creation, been disturbed by the rude sounds of the labourer's axe and the downfall of its ancient inhabitants; a stillness and tranquillity which from that day were to give place to the voice of labour, the confusion of camps and towns, and the busy hum of its new possessors." In the evening of the day the whole of the party that had come

round in the *Supply* assembled at the point where they had first landed in the morning, and on which a flagstaff had been erected and an Union Jack displayed; the body of marines that were with them fired several volleys in honour of the occasion, startling from the surrounding woods whole flocks of gorgeous birds, and making the forests echo with a reverberatory welcome; while between each peal the governor and officers drank the healths of his Majesty and the Royal Family, and success to the new colony, accompanied by the shouts of the whole party. On every succeeding 26th of January from that period the day has been uniformly observed with rejoicings, and each anniversary has shown a continued realization of the good wishes of that first little party for the prosperity of the colony.

A lapse of sixty-four years has shown a wondrous change. It has been said by Count Strzelecki that "the Anglo-Saxon reproduces his country wherever he hoists his country's flag;" and certainly in no other place in the world is this more evident than at the metropolis of New South Wales; for while the pioneers of civilization, leaving behind them the pleasures and comforts of home and kindred, landed from their vessel to take possession of a newly discovered country on the other side of the globe,

tenanted by the wild and savage inhabitants of the woods, and the capabilities of which were not merely undeveloped but absolutely unknown; the emigrant of the present day, on arriving at Sydney, is at once introduced to a flourishing city, inhabited by a civilized people, in a country where every necessary and luxury of life are produced and available in abundance.

The voyage from England to Australia, averaging from three to four months, is now so much a matter of course, and so proverbially safe, that no person in undertaking it makes any calculation of its dangers; it was not, however, so considered by those who embarked in the first fleet, for Colonel Collins, in his record of that voyage, says, "Thus under the blessing of God was happily completed in eight months and one week a voyage, which, before it was undertaken, the mind hardly dared to contemplate, and on which it was impossible to reflect without some apprehension of its termination." It was with feelings such as these that the first European navigators of Port Jackson entered the heads and broke the silence and solitude that had reigned in those distant regions since their creation; and the following lines, descriptive of another locality, might not inaptly have been applied to the scene that was then presented to their view:—

"All is as still as death ! wild solitude  
Reigns undisturb'd along the voiceless shore,  
And every tree seems standing as it stood  
Five thousand years ago. The loud waves' roar  
Were music in these wilds ! The wise and good,  
That went of old as hermits to adore  
The God of nature in the desert drear,  
Might sure have found a fit sojourning here."

The rocks, forming the coast in the neighbourhood of Port Jackson, and the shores of the bay itself, consist entirely of sandstone, extending in nearly horizontal layers, south as far as Illawarra, and north as far as Newcastle. At these points the sandstone is broken through by the intrusion of trap-rock, forming the Illawarra Mountain on the south, and Nobby's Island, near Newcastle, on the north. The whole of the intervening coast-line forms an abrupt mural escarpment, rising in many places, as at the south head, to an elevation of from 250 to 300 feet. The only interruptions to the continuity of this line, are those of Port Hacken, Botany Bay, Port Jackson, Broken Bay, Tuggerah Beach, and Reid's Mistake. These inlets have all the same general physical aspect, consisting of a series of indentations, or coves, bounded by a succession of terraces of sandstone (apparently five in number), resembling in form ancient sea beaches; the rocks at the foot of each terrace being water-worn and



excavated. The supposition that these terraces are the remains of ancient sea beaches, receives confirmation from the fact that at the base of many of them are found large deposits of sea-shells, identical with those inhabiting the sea below. Many of these shells, too, are almost microscopic in size, and exist in such quantities, and are so widely distributed, as to set aside the suggestion of their having been brought to their present locality by the aborigines of the country.

Geology, taking a more philosophical view of the fact, demonstrates that these shells have been deposited by the waves of the ocean, and that the land on which we now dwell has undergone a series of upheavings, equal in number to the terraces or sea-coasts still visible in the formation of the rocks. This view of the case will appear novel only to those who have never turned their attention to geological phenomena, for the features of the country around us are in perfect harmony with what is observed on other parts of the earth's surface. The whole of the west coast of South America, extending from the base to the summit of the Andes, consists of a succession of such ridges as we find on the shores of Australia; and the same phenomenon is observable in innumerable other instances. On the steep sides of Snow-

don, in the valley of Glen Roy, in Scotland, forming the roads of Fingal, on the coast of Norway, and on the shores of Italy, we find abundant proofs that even the firm-set earth on which we tread is not exempt from the vicissitude and change to which all created things are subjected.

“ Of chance or change, oh ! let not man complain,  
Else shall he never, never cease to wail ;  
For, from the imperial dome, to where the swain  
Rears the lone cottage in the silent dale,  
All feel the assault of Fortune's fickle gale :  
Art, empire, earth itself to change are doom'd ;  
Earthquakes have raised to heaven the humble vale,  
And gulfs the mountain's mighty mass entomb'd :  
And where the Atlantic rolls wide continents have  
bloom'd.”

The sandstone of Sydney contains no fossil animal remains by which its geological age can properly be ascertained ; and it will require much labour and careful examination to determine its exact geological position in relation to European deposits. From the examination of rocks found associated with it at Illawarra and on the Hunter, and from their fossil contents, it would appear to be contemporaneous with the older silurian deposits of Europe. There is, at all events, abundant evidence to prove that New South Wales is among the oldest parts of the globe ; contrary to the fancy of

some philosophers, who, from the novelty observable in the forms of its plants and animals, conceive that its existence must have been posterior to, and independent of the rest of the world.

When seen from a distance, the Australian coast wears a very unpromising aspect. Composed of a line of sandstone rocks,—sculptured in many places, by exposure to the weather, into the most grotesque and fantastic shapes, and partially clothed with stunted evergreen shrubs, alternating with patches of white sand,—the tame coast-line gives no promise of the beautiful scenery it conceals, and speaks of nothing but barrenness and desolation to those who have left behind them the refreshing luxuriance of English scenery, or the wilder landscapes of Scotland and Ireland. But the eye which has been jaundiced by looking so long on the unvarying circle of the dark blue ocean—“unchangeable save in its wild waves’ play”—longs for a green spot on which to repose; and the heart, panting for freedom from its floating prison-house, bounds forward to welcome the promised land. The prospect improves as we approach the Heads. The high precipitous rocks, frowning defiance to the waves of the Pacific, which break in whiteness at their base, arrest the eye of the stranger by

their grandeur and extraordinary excavations ; and the light-house, whose cheering beam had shone like a meteor for leagues over the waters, now rises in its beauty on the brow of the rocky coast flanked by Macquarie Tower—a building which, like many other of the works of man, appears to have been erected more for ornament than use.

The pleasing intelligence that an English vessel has entered the Heads has been known for some time in Sydney, although she has not yet come within sight of the city ; for the pilot is on board, and he has spoken, in the language of his profession, to the signal post on the South Head, which has, in its turn, addressed itself to the citizens of Sydney and the inhabitants of Paramatta. Conjecture is afloat as to the name and cargo of the vessel. Some are expecting friends, others merchandise, but all entertain the hope of a letter from home. It is, accordingly, no wonder that the signal of a vessel from England is always a welcome sight to natives of that country, or their descendants now dwelling at the antipodes of their fatherland. But, while all is flutter and excitement in Sydney, the vessel under a favourable breeze is pursuing the even tenor of her way, “ walking the waters like a thing of life,” and bearing in her bosom the heralds of hope to some—

of misfortune and distress to others. She has, likewise, on board some anxious hearts throbbing for a sight of the long looked-for city. After all the dangers, and privations, and disappointments usually attending a long voyage, none but those who have felt can conceive the delightful sensations produced by the symptoms of a near approach to the termination of their journey. Within the last few hours what a variety of conflicting feelings have agitated the breasts of the inmates of that vessel! Before the coast was visible messengers had come to bid them be of good cheer, for the expected shore was at hand. The sea-weed, and broken branches of trees, drifting past; the chirping of a bird from one of the vessel's yards; the flutter of a tiny butterfly, sporting its painted wings in the sunbeams, flashing among the cordage like a pencil of rainbow-light, but preferring a return to its native woods, to the pleasure of being impaled on a needle for the gratification of the curious;—had all spoken eloquently to these wanderers o'er the deep, of the proximity of the country. At length the delightful sound of "Land! land!" had burst on the ear, like the voice of him that bringeth glad tidings of great joy; and the first faint glimpse of the coast floating in the far distance, like a cloud on the horizon, had been welcomed

with as much pleasure as was experienced by the inmates of the Ark, while resting on Mount Ararat, when they received the olive-branch from the dove, in token that the waters had assuaged from the face of the earth, and that the dry land was beginning to reappear. "On, on the vessel flies;" the glorious sun of Australia is high in the heavens; the outline of the coast becomes clearer every moment. The breeze that now fans their cheeks comes loaded with the fragrance of the woods. The deck is crowded with eager, delightful faces, all turned in one direction—all actuated by one wish—all anxious once more to feel the ground beneath them; once more to look on the pleasing diversity of wood, and mountain, and valley, to which they have so long been strangers. Even the dumb animals on board seem to partake of the common excitement, and neigh, or low, or bleat, to express their joyful welcome. But the vessel, having at last entered between the Australian Pillars of Hercules, is now rapidly gaining on Bradley's Head, and in a few minutes the city of Sydney in all its beauty will be exposed to sight.

Let us, however, take a glance at the harbour through which we are passing. There does not, perhaps, in any part of the world, exist a more beautiful, extensive, and

commodious harbour than Port Jackson ; and no person, however destitute of what is called sentimental feeling, can look on it without emotions of pleasure. The magnificent sheet of water spread out before us, and reflecting on its unruffled surface the hues of an Australian sky—

“ So calm, so clear, so purely beautiful,  
That God alone is to be seen in heaven ; ”

the great variety of stately vessels riding at anchor, or arriving or departing ; the number of small colonial craft, and sailing-boats and wherries, plying in all directions over its surface ; its romantic wooded borders, presenting the appearance of promontories, creeks, and bays, and spotted with white cottages rising gracefully among the trees ; the windmills, and the castellated and baronial-looking buildings which crown the green heights of Woolloomooloo ; and the new Government-house, glittering in the sunbeams, like a palace of white marble ; altogether exhibit a picture to the eye of a most imposing and delightful character. On entering the Heads for the first time, the stranger must gaze with unbounded satisfaction on the scene. To him who has for several consecutive months been traversing the mighty ocean, gazing day after day on the same appear-

ance of sea and sky—"with the blue above and the blue below," and little to vary the monotony of the view—the sight of land must always be welcome. He hails its first dim outline on the horizon as the reappearance of a long-lost friend. The most barren rock in the ocean, though tenanted only by the solitary sea-bird, would be welcomed with delight; but when, instead of a barren rock, the immigrant to New South Wales enters the land-locked harbour of Port Jackson, and, on doubling Bradley's Head, is introduced at once to one of the most magnificent scenes on the globe, his feelings will more easily be conceived than described. It is impossible to tell what may have been the emotions of others, but our own first feelings of pleasure at the beauty of the scenery among which it was to be my lot for a time to reside, were considerably increased by association, from the strong features of resemblance which the harbour presented to some of the lakes of Scotland formerly visited with delight. All men, however different in temperament, rank, or profession, must gaze on Port Jackson with pleasure. The merchant beholds it with confident assurance that it must for ever constitute Sydney the metropolis of New South Wales; and the philosopher rejoices that the wonderful capabilities of such a harbour have been



discovered and taken advantage of by the most enterprising nation in the world.



PORT JACKSON.

The Harbour of Port Jackson, as seen from the point from which the above illustration was taken, is the most remarkable and best known view about Sydney. From George-street north, from the Flag-staff, from almost every height around the town, nearly the same view meets the eye. It is the view which first

breaks on the gaze of the wanderer to these shores, after months of a monotonous vegetation at sea—the view over which he casts his eye to welcome the white sail of an English vessel, when the pilot's report speaks to him from the Flag-staff of the loved ones at home—the view which is “first beheld, forgotten last,” by every immigrant to New South Wales—the view, in short, which all persons in the colony, old and young, rich and poor, bond and free, of whatever profession, rank, or creed, have looked upon so often and admired so much, that its coves and islets, and even its minutest features, are indelibly engraved on the tablets of their memory, and have become as familiar to them as household words.

There are numerous delightful spots about the harbour, necessarily hid from the eye, in any single position that the spectator can choose; but it would be difficult to find a situation which could give a more complete idea of the pictorial beauty of the form and boundaries of Port Jackson, than the one selected; but, to see it in all its beauty and variety, and fantastic windings, it is necessary to look on it from different positions, or to call in the aid of a waterman well acquainted with the localities, and to sail with him from headland to headland, from isle to isle, and to explore

the numerous coves, and creeks, and bays, with which the harbour is so abundantly supplied.

The town of Sydney, with its forts, public buildings, and streets, rising from the water, and above each other, height after height; the bustle of the shipping, steamboats, &c., and the numberless beautifully situated villas in the neighbourhood, form one of the most perfect combinations of picturesque and interesting objects possible. The town itself is built on two hills, the terminations of which towards the harbour are fortified, in one case by Macquarie's Fort, and in the other by Dawes' Battery. From the first commences the Government domain, beautifully laid out in gardens and pleasure-grounds, all open to the public, and on which is built the Governor's house, or rather houses. From the other point commences the town, which is fully two miles in extent, and through the whole of which runs George-street, the principal street of the city. There are several other streets running in a parallel direction to it, and intersected at right angles by others. The streets present to us every variety of building, from the early settler's log-hut—rudely constructed and by no means weather-proof, carrying the mind back to the time when the site of the town was covered with wood, and parrots and kangaroos were the sole

inhabitants—to the handsome stone dwellings of the wealthy colonists, which would be no disgrace to the finest streets of London. George-street is a fine, open, bustling street of business—the shops quite English in their appearance, and in many instances equally splendid in their fittings-up: indeed, were it not for the drays drawn by six or eight bullocks occasionally met with, and for now and then seeing a little group of natives fantastically rigged out in such left-off finery as they may have been enabled to procure from the townsfolk, it would be difficult to imagine ourselves out of Old England.

It is quite impossible to observe the number of first-class vessels, from all parts of the world, entering and leaving the harbour, the consequent bustle at the various quays and wharves, the business-like appearance of the people, and the lively character of the streets, lighted in the evening by gas, without feeling assured that you are in a place where prosperity and the comforts of this life are largely participated in by its inhabitants. Although apparel is expensive, the people generally speaking dress remarkably well, and it is extremely rare to meet with anything which would remind you of the poverty and distress so commonly and extensively experienced in the land we have left behind us.

The style of the modern built houses, and of those which are daily springing up around, is essentially English; and the ground is so very valuable that gardens are exceedingly scarce. This value of the ground, and the high wages paid to all kinds of mechanics, causes house rent to appear exorbitantly high to the new-comer. A first-rate shop, independently of the house above it, will command from 150*l.* to 300*l.* per annum, according to its style and situation; while there is scarcely a decent house occupied by the poorest class at less than 50*l.* per annum. A house we ourselves occupied in a retired and respectable street, containing six rooms, kitchen, and cellar, the front parlour about twelve feet square, the drawing-room about sixteen feet, and other rooms in proportion, was considered cheap at 190*l.* per annum. This large annual outlay is startling at first sight; but when we find that mechanics are earning their ten shillings per day, and that other classes of society are remunerated on something like the same scale, we become reconciled to the expenditure, and the more so when we find that there are no tax-gatherers to knock at the door.

As regards bathing, there is no English watering place which can surpass Sydney. Baths are erected, at which, for the payment of

fifteen shillings per quarter, the most timid can enjoy that luxury without fear; while for those whose nerves are a "leetle" stronger, there is a beautiful cove, overhung with a profusion of trees, where on a gently shelving bed of sand we can encourage an intimacy between



CITY OF SYDNEY.

ourselves and the liquid element; and for those who are accomplished in the art of swimming, there are rocks from which they can fearlessly plunge into the refreshing flood.

The above illustration will convey to those

who are strangers an idea of the general characteristics of the metropolis of Australia. We were about to enlarge our observations upon this important and "capital" feature of Australasia, when we happened to come across Mr. Mossman's entertaining book upon the Gold Regions;\* and his description of the city is so graphic and correct, that we may well be excused for transferring a portion of it to our own pages:—

"Stepping into a skiff alongside the vessel, about ten in the morning, we thread our way amongst a busy mass of shipping, from the small coasting cutter to the square-rigged vessel of a thousand tons, all employed lading and unlading, with ever and anon the cheerful 'Yeo heave ho' of the sailors. We land on a massive stone-built quay, where there are ships moored drawing twelve and fourteen feet water, and proceed to a compact looking custom-house, where we meet with a civility and attention unknown in the old country ports. Pursuing our course into the city, we pass along spacious and well-paved streets, all built of white hewn stone, with elegant shops and warehouses, while at intervals some handsome public building peers out from the mass of buildings. At every

\* "The Gold Regions of Australia." By Samuel Mossman. Orr & Co.

step we elbow a bustling throng of people, dressed much in the same fashion as ourselves, only a little lighter in their habiliments. The carriage-way is thronged with carriages, cabs, horsemen, omnibuses, and carts. Through this crowd we pass, scarcely observable as strangers, while each face seems anxiously looking forward to its individual pursuit in the coming business of the day. Here are bakers in their carts distributing the daily bread; there, butchers trotting on with their baskets of meat; here, an omnibus conductor, with his finger up, is calling out, 'Paddington,' 'Surrey Hills;' there, a jarvey from the stand hails us with the familiar 'Cab, sir?' whilst the cockney drawl of the hucksters, selling fish and fruit, sounds so refreshing on the ear, so thoroughly English, that we stop in amazement. In fact, here is an every-day scene before us which at once stamps the community. There is no mistaking it. The same may be seen at a corresponding time of the day in the High-street, Islington, London; North Bridge-street, Edinburgh; Piccadilly, Manchester; New-street, Birmingham; or Bold-street, Liverpool. Instead of thinking ourselves fifteen thousand miles away from these localities, we could imagine a railway station close by, where the next train would take us in a few hours to any one of them. To the



immigrant from the United Kingdom this is not a *foreign* land. The novelty to him is the familiar aspect presented by everything round—in fact, the absence of novelty; and he is surprised, after a three or four months' voyage, to find an every-day scene like this burst upon his astonished sight, where he expected wild and picturesque barbarism. To the man of homely sympathies the surprise is agreeable; and he begins to trace in the passing throng resemblances to beloved faces which he has left far behind.

“Those tall chimneys within view belong to steam flour-mills, of which there are upwards of seventy in the colony, besides fifty water-mills, twenty-six windmills, and twenty-eight horse-mills, all employed in grinding and dressing grain. There are likewise about ninety-five tallow-melting establishments, which annually boil down half a million of sheep, and slaughter fifty thousand horned cattle. And of manufactories, there are five distilleries, twenty-four breweries, three sugar refineries, twenty soap and candle, fifteen tobacco and snuff, six woollen cloth (producing annually 200,000 yards of tweed and broadcloth), four hat, four rope, forty tanneries, five salting and preserving meat establishments; one gas works, seven potteries, one glass works, one smelting works,

and thirteen iron and brass foundries;—a list of useful works which, increasing as they are every year, bid fair in time to produce manufactures sufficient to shut out one-half the present imports of British goods.

“Hark! one o’clock strikes from the churches, and is echoed back by ‘two bells’ from the shipping. Business throughout the city is suspended for an hour. The workmen go to dinner, while their masters eat a hearty luncheon. This hour is as strictly kept here as the *siesta* in a Spanish town; the difference being, that while the Don sleeps, John Bull eats. Here are numerous *table d’hôtes* and ordinaries, dining from twenty to sixty, with courses of soup and fish, roast and boiled, as much as any man can eat in this land of beef and mutton from a choice of twenty to thirty dishes, with dessert, for the small matter of one shilling,—a coin as easily earned by the clever and industrious man here as sixpence is in England. Here is luncheon: a goodly display of viands. Turtle from Moreton Bay; although not so rich in flavour as West India, yet it makes good soup, and, like beef and mutton here, may be had at a penny or twopence per pound. Sole and schnapper from Botany Bay. We can’t boast of salmon or turbot. Wild turkey from the plains; ducks and pigeons from the Hunter

River, rolling in fat. The vegetables are sweet and juicy, and the salad crisp, having been cut before sunrise; and those smiling, black-coated potatoes are from Van Diemen's Land, the finest in the world.

"Fruit, in the summer season, composes principally our midday meal; they are the treasures of a warm climate, and yet to be had at a trifling expense. Here are pine-apples and bananas from Moreton Bay and Brisbane Water, where, in the former localities, they grow, like cabbages, in the open air; oranges from the extensive groves near Paramatta, where their blossoms flavour the honey; melons, grapes, peaches, nectarines, plums, loquats, and other fruits from the neighbourhood of the town; gooseberries, raspberries, strawberries, currants, apples, and pears, from Van Diemen's Land. And here we can wash down the *débris* with a glass of native-grown wine: first, an excellent species of Sauterne from Camden, which is the chief character of the Australian vintage; next, a tolerable claret from Regentville; a middling sort of Madeira from Varroville; and a brisk glass of Burnett's champagne from the Hunter River. Verily, this land can produce your light wines most plenteously, which will, no doubt, improve in quality as the growers attain experience."

The Sydney people are early risers; and it is a very common thing to see a number of livery-attended turn-outs raising the dust of the Domain at six or seven in the morning. This Domain is one of the most beautiful spots imaginable; in some respects it is not unlike Mount Edgecumbe at Plymouth, but the



GOVERNMENT-HOUSE, SYDNEY.

ground is not so high. On it, as we have mentioned, the Government-house is built, the

gardens of which are open to the public from sunrise to sunset; and the pleasure of a ramble through them is enhanced by the music of the band of the regiment quartered there, which generally plays every day upon the lawn. The flower garden contains, in a high state of perfection, varieties of every beautiful flower that you may have seen at home, and numbers of those which are indigenous, and, consequently, new.

The botanical garden also forms part of the Domain, and is also an object of great attraction. Here are all those plants and trees which cause one's imagination to take flight to distant parts; the air is loaded with a delicious perfume, and the only sounds you hear are those of the sea rippling on the neighbouring beach, and the constant song of the myriads of locusts that occupy the surrounding trees and shrubs. These gardens, from their delightful situation, their proximity to the city, the pleasant walks they contain, the great variety of rare shrubs and flowers and trees they produce, and the fine views they command, have been much frequented on holidays by all classes of the community since 1837, when they were thrown open to the public on Sundays by Governor Sir George Gipps. The Upper, or, as it is sometimes called, the Middle Garden, was planned as early

as 1812 by Mrs. Macquarie, and formed out of the wild bush, under the superintendence of Mr. Alexander Fraser, botanist. In 1832, James Busby, Esq. introduced into the colony a great variety of vines, which were planted in this garden; and it has since occasionally continued to receive fresh accessions of flowers and trees from many countries. This garden is known by the magnificent specimen of the Norfolk Island pine which adorns its middle walk.

The lower, and more extensive and beautiful garden, separated from the upper by the walk leading from the fort along the Government bathing house, and occupying the circular sweep of the head of Farm Cove, was not in existence when Lieut.-Gen. Sir Ralph Darling assumed the government of the colony in December 1825. The spot which now smiles in all the loveliness of a highly cultivated garden was then nothing but thick bush, and bare, barren rocks. But by the direction of the governor, and the persevering skill of Mr. Fraser and his botanical successor, Mr. Richard Cunningham, (who was lost in the bush in one of Sir Thomas Mitchell's exploring excursions,) this desert and solitary place was soon made to rejoice and blossom with shrubs and flowers of the richest hues. Both the Upper and Lower Gardens were much extended and beautified,

from 1833 to the present year, under the able superintendence of the late Mr. James Anderson, botanist, who effected greater improvements on them than all the former botanists together.

Through another part of the Domain is formed a most excellent drive, and several beautiful walks, in extent more than three miles; these are cut through the bush, (or, as we should call it in England, the wood,) and delightful peeps of the town and harbour, with its beautiful islands, are constantly recurring. And here are seen an immense variety of the most elegant wild flowers peeping out from the beautifully broken ground, birds of lovely plumage seeking for food, and multitudes of those exquisite insects which are so highly valued by the entomologists at home..

The climate is very delightful. The heat is certainly greater than it is in England, but it is of a different kind, and never causes that depressing and suffocating sensation so frequently experienced there. It is, on the contrary, what has been aptly called an "exhilarating heat."

A branch of the harbour of Port Jackson, called the Paramatta River, is navigable for something like twenty miles, and affords to the Sydney "cockneys" their "Battersea," "Putney," and "Richmond," although under different names.

Along the banks of the river from Sydney, to the town of Paramatta, a distance of about fifteen miles, and particularly in the vicinity of Kissing Point, almost equidistant from either, there are numerous orchards, orangeries, vineyards, and vegetable gardens, which give a pleasing variety to the wilder parts of the



PARAMATTA RIVER, AND COCKATOO ISLAND.

natural scenery, and supply the Sydney markets with a multiplicity of their rare productions. In the town of Paramatta there is little of the



bustle and stir of business, that give such life to the metropolis; but the traffic on the river is very considerable. Besides the number of boats and vessels of small burden employed in the conveyance of produce, fire-wood, and other marketable commodities, there are several steam-boats that ply daily between the towns. Paramatta is more a place of retirement than of business. Its distance, too, from Sydney being so easy, the scenery all the way so delightful and refreshing, and such facility and rapidity of conveyance being afforded by the steamers, it is not surprising that a trip to it by water should form an agreeable recreation on Sundays, to those who are confined to sedentary and unhealthy occupations during the week.

The above view is taken from the high grounds of Balmain, overlooking Paramatta River, near the road through the bush to Sydney, round the head of Darling Harbour, and not far distant from Birch Grove, the delightful seat of Captain McLean, Principal Superintendent of Hyde Park Barracks. The spectator is supposed to be looking north-east. In the foreground of the picture we have a specimen of the Bush scenery that prevails along the banks of Paramatta River, and Port Jackson. The *eucalyptus*, or gum-tree, is the most common production of the soil; but it is

found associated with many others, such as the acacia, in great variety, the iron and stringy barks, the apple-tree, the tea-tree, the native oak, the cedar, the grass-tree, and a great diversity of flowering shrubs. In the neighbourhood of Sydney the wood is generally of stunted growth, but in many parts of the colony it flourishes in much greater perfection, and rises to gigantic size. The sketch given will convey some idea of the soil and native productions of Balmain, and of the amount of labour that must have been required with such materials, to form the large, populous, and thriving village, or rather town, which now rises amidst the rocks and brush of this once wild region.

The little singularly-shaped islet, floating on the water to the left, swelling out at the extremities, and depressed towards the centre, is called Spectacle Island, from its faint resemblance, or rather its want of resemblance, to a huge pair of spectacles, and the point of land on the opposite shore is denominated Pulpit Point, from its equally fanciful resemblance to a pulpit. This species of nomenclature has been very fashionable in the colony ever since its establishment. It has been practised by our discoverers of districts and rivers, for the purpose of gratifying the vanity of the governors,

or other officials of the time; but to show that it is a practice "more honoured in the breach than the observance," we have merely to contrast the fine euphonious native names that have been retained, such as Woolloomooloo, Paramatta, Illawarra, &c. with such commonplace appellations as the Hunter, the Murray, the Patterson, Gipps' Land, Spectacle Island, Cockatoo Island, Goat Island, Pinchgut, the Bottle and Glass, the Hen and Chickens, and the Sow and Pigs!

The principal feature in the illustration, however, is Cockatoo Island, which is still used as a prison house and house of correction for those reckless and misguided men, who having been originally transported to this colony for offences against the laws of England, are now undergoing the penalty of a second conviction for having outraged the laws of Australia. The buildings on the island are the work of the prisoners. Those seen on the left are the soldiers' barracks, capable of accommodating fifty men; to the right of these stand the convicts' barracks, with suitable accommodation for three hundred prisoners; and further to the right is the residence of the superintendent and his assistant. In addition to the erection of these buildings, and of some cells for solitary confinement, the labour of the prisoners has been

directed to the excavation from the solid rock of several extensive siloes, for the preservation of grain. These siloes are air-tight, and so spacious as to cover nearly 100,000 bushels of wheat. The experiment has proved quite successful; for the grain has been found sweet, and in nowise deteriorated, after two years' exclusion from the light of day.

The island has a bare, desolate appearance, since the trees that had flourished upon it for centuries have been cut down, and their places supplied by white walks, and sand-stone buildings, which, with the barren rocks on which they stand, now glare in the sunbeams, and afford no cool refreshing shade for the eye of the spectator. Only a few of its ancient inhabitants, those lofty tufted gum-trees to the right, are left standing as melancholy records of the ruin that has been wrought by the hand of civilization, on the pictorial appearance of the island.

Soon after the discovery of the eastern part of New Holland, by the immortal Cook, the British Parliament determined to establish a penal colony on that coast, at Botany Bay. The object which the government had in view confessedly was, to rid the country of the load of criminals that was accumulating in her gaols, to find a suitable station for the safe custody, the

punishment, and reformation of these criminals ; and from such materials, as well as from the emigration of free settlers, to form a British colony, a new dependency of the British Crown. A fleet of eleven sail was accordingly fitted out, and put under the command of Captain Arthur Phillip, R. N., Governor of the new colony, which was established, as we have mentioned, at the end of Sydney Cove, on the 26th day of January, 1788. During the administration of Governors Phillip, Hunter, King, Bligh, and Macquarie, or from 1788 to 1821, the system of convict discipline in the colony was, in its leading features, very much the same. With the exception of those retained as domestic servants for government officers, the rest of the prison population were employed in government buildings, experimental farms, or road making. The great abundance of free labour at the disposal of government, during the long administration of Governor Macquarie, is sufficiently attested by the incredible number of public buildings which he erected, and the extensive lines of communication which he opened to some of the principal agricultural districts of the colony.

The era of free emigration, which commenced to flow steadily in the early part of the government of Sir Thomas Brisbane, altered in some

measure the prevailing system of discipline. Then commenced the judicious and beneficial assignment system, which at once relieved the government of the burden of supporting a large number of its superabundant prisoners, and furnished the free settler, at a cheap market, with abundance of labour, to clear and cultivate his land, to manage his stock, and supply his establishment with domestic servants. This system, which continued in operation till within the last few years, like all human systems, had its evils as well as its benefits. It was certainly beneficial to the government and the settler; but it did away with the uniformity of discipline that formerly prevailed; it left the punishment of the assigned man too much to the caprice of his employer; and accordingly, while many criminals, by mild and humane treatment, have been thoroughly reformed, many, it is to be feared, if we can believe their own dying confessions, have, by tyrannical treatment, been driven to the bush, to prey upon their fellow-men, and finish their career on the scaffold.

While on the subject of the convict population, it will, perhaps, be considered a grave omission, if we do not allude to the existence of a deep and wide-spread feeling, that these colonies should no longer be made the receptacle for the scum of our gaols. This feeling has

developed itself in the most energetic manner. A league has been formed on a similar principle to the Anti-Corn-Law League, and called the Anti-Transportation League. Meetings have been held in all the three south-eastern colonies, and in Van Diemen's Land, and resolutions passed breathing loud war against the home government, should they persist in corrupting their society longer against the will of the colonists, and reproaching it with "holding out the word of promise to the ear, and breaking it to the hope." Money has been extensively subscribed to carry on the agitation, and thirty citizens of the city of Melbourne put down their hundred guineas each to promote the cause to which they have set their hands. There can be no question that the labour of the convicts in making roads, and constructing other public works, in the early years of the colony, was of essential service to its progress; but there can also be no manner of doubt that the colonists themselves are the best judges of the time when they can afford to dispense with this contaminating and pestiferous assistance; and due intimation of this having been given to the authorities at home, and the latter having recognised the validity of the argument by promises to abstain, and yet continuing in spite of their promises to send ship load after ship

load of felons, the colonists have evident cause for the energetic nature of their proceedings; and justice being on their side, there can be no doubt whatever of their ultimate success. The government, however, have, it is right to state, already sent out an expedition to New Caledonia, and other islands in the Pacific, with a view of selecting a convenient place for the future reception and punishment of convicts; and now that the discovery of gold in such abundance in these colonies renders it of still greater importance that reckless and unscrupulous criminals should be kept as far away as possible from places where, under the most favourable circumstances, the administration of justice is attended with great difficulty, and society has a sort of natural tendency to throw off all restraining fetters, and level every distinction but that of physical strength, it is probable that the authorities here will think twice at least before despatching another cargo of crime to a place where its presence will be so eminently dangerous and impolitic.

Before we leave the colony, however, let us just glance at the general features of the interior. Besides the metropolis, and the town of Paramatta, which we have already devoted some attention to, there are a large number of other towns and villages scattered over the



colony, and which are all in a prosperous and improving condition. The land in the colony, generally speaking, is better adapted for pastoral than for agricultural purposes, but to this rule there are many exceptions. In various parts of the colony there are extensive tracts of land remarkable for fertility, yielding during several years in succession, without any manure, from thirty to forty bushels of wheat per acre. The Rev. Dr. Mackenzie states that he has seen three hundred bushels of wheat raised from eight acres, in the valley of the Hume River, that being the third crop of wheat raised on the same land without manure; also, that he has seen *seven successive* crops of wheat raised from the same field, which had never been manured by the hand of man, and yet that the seventh crop averaged twenty-five bushels to the acre. One of the most fertile districts in the colony of New South Wales, is that called the Cow Pastures, so called from the fact of large herds of wild cattle having been found there at the time of the discovery or exploration of the district, which were the descendants of three runaway cattle belonging to a herd brought to the colony by H. M. S. *Sirius*, soon after the foundation of the colony. These pastures extend northward from the river Bargo to the junction of the Warragumba and Nepean

rivers, bounded to the west by some of the branches of the latter river and the hills of Nattai; and they contain about 60,000 acres, the greater part consisting of a fertile sandy loam, resting on a substratum of clay. Towards the southern hills of Nattai the Cow Pastures are broken into abrupt and hilly ridges; but for a distance of three miles from the Nepean they consist of easy slopes and gentle undulations, from the centre of which rises a lofty hill, called Mount Hunter.

These Cow Pastures are situated in the Camden county, and are about fifty miles south of Sydney. This county is also celebrated for containing within its limits, and in immediate proximity to the Cow Pastures, the fertile, beautiful, and romantic district of Illawarra, or the Five Islands. The scenery at Illawarra is totally different in character from the remainder of the county, and also from Cumberland, the metropolitan county; tall fern-trees, having a foliage exactly similar to that of the fern plant in this country, but whose leaves are gigantic in the same proportion in which the tree exceeds the plant in size; umbrageous cedars, graceful palm-trees, with numerous creeping vines throwing around, in wild luxuriance, their flowery tassels; and abounding with flights of red-crested black cockatoos, and purple

cowries, make the spectator fancy himself in some tropical region, blest at the same time with the exhilarating atmosphere of a temperate clime. The Illawarra district is not very easily accessible from Sydney by land, but there are steam vessels passing regularly twice or thrice



TOM THUMB'S LAGOON.

a-week between the township of Wollongong, the port of the Illawarra district, and Sydney, and conveying the fertile produce of the district to the Sydney markets.

The illustration is taken from the Illawarra district; its subject being a beautiful salt-water lagoon, discovered by the same enterprising explorer whose name has been transmitted to posterity in conjunction with the Strait which divides Van Diemen's Land from the Australian continent, viz. Bass's Strait. The lagoon is that called Tom Thumb's Lagoon, from Bass having passed over the sand bar which divides it from the sea in a small boat, called the Tom Thumb. There are several lagoons of a similar character, most of them abounding in excellent fish.

With regard to the statistics of the colony of New South Wales, it may be interesting to state, that by an official document on the subject of the progress of the colony from 1840 to 1849, during which period the colony of Victoria was a province of that colony, and was therefore included in the returns, it appeared that the population had nearly doubled itself in the course of that ten years, having risen from 129,463 in 1840, to 246,299 in 1849, of which latter number 101,470 were females. The proportionate excess of males was much greater at the former than the later period, but the diminution of the disparity cannot be attributed so much to the greater evenness of the immigration during the period, as to the extended

duration of female life as compared with that of the other sex, and to the fact of the children born being more nearly balanced. Of 75,481 births in the period stated, 38,310 were males, and 37,171 were females, while of 25,821 deaths, 15,987 were males, and only 9,843 females. In deaths among adults the number of men each year is nearly twice that of women; this result being probably due in a great measure to habits of intemperance. Since 1839 the religions of the public emigrants have been recorded, and up to 1840 there appeared to have been 46,869 Protestants, 23,337 Catholics, and 79 other denominations. The schools had increased in the ten years from 167, with 9,040 scholars, to 558, with 25,642 scholars. Of these 558 schools 222 were supported either wholly, or in part, by grants from the colonial treasury, amounting to 16,796*l.* per annum, the number of pupils in these being 15,426, of whom 6,553 are Church of England, 2,586 Presbyterian, 1,678 Wesleyan, 219 Independent, and 3,313 Roman Catholic. The number of lunatics in asylums on the 31st of December, 1849, was 315 males, (chiefly convicts,) and only 98 females. With respect to crime, the convictions for felony, notwithstanding the population had nearly doubled, had decreased from 662 in 1840, to 543 in 1849, and those for misdemeanour from

170 to 125. There were eight executions in the former year, and only four in the latter. Litigation, likewise, had decreased in a manner still more satisfactory, the cases tried in the Supreme Court having been 555 in 1840, and only 160 in 1849. The declared value of the imports in 1849 was 1,793,420*l.*, and of the exports, 1,891,270*l.*, of which 1,238,559*l.* consisted of wool, and 249,932*l.* of tallow. The shipping entered inwards numbered 898 vessels, with 218,967 tonnage; the total outwards being 907 vessels, with 214,056 tonnage. The revenue was 575,692*l.*, and the expenditure 516,533*l.*

As we have already intimated in the previous chapter, the subject of the gold discoveries is reserved for separate consideration, and therefore we shall not further allude to that subject in the present chapter. But as the effects produced by that discovery are essentially different in the colony of Victoria and the colony of New South Wales,—a difference partly due to the diversity of richness in the deposits of gold in the two colonies, and partly to the more consolidated condition of the latter colony as compared with its younger competitor,—it is a point of interest here to state how far the ordinary state of affairs has been affected by the new avenue to wealth which has been presented by the gold “diggings.”

On this point we cannot do better than present to our readers the very excellent summary which appeared in the *Sydney Morning Herald*, of the 6th of March last, and which so completely informs us on all points with regard to the present state and future prospects of the colony, that it will be unnecessary for us to add another word.

“ Our friends in England will naturally be anxious to hear, by the ships now on the eve of departure from Port Jackson, how we are getting on under the new circumstances which have befallen the colony ; as we were naturally anxious to hear how the first intimation of those circumstances would be received by them. Both parties have been somewhat disappointed in their expectations. On our side it was generally thought that the tidings of our gold-field would in England be received with considerable excitement ; they appear to have been received with considerable *sang froid*. On their side it was generally thought that the discovery would throw the colony into universal confusion, and put an end to all the usual pursuits of industry ; no such results have as yet been witnessed. Perhaps neither party took a sufficiently comprehensive view of the facts connected with the other. On our side it ought to have been remembered that the news would reach England

just as the public mind had become exhausted by the prolonged excitements of the Great Exhibition, and was for the time in a state of *nil admirari*, on which scarcely anything could make an impression. The people had seen all the glories of the world centered in a single focus, and so dazzled had they been by the resplendent vision, that the glories of the Australian Ophir were comparatively dim in their sight. On their side it ought to have been remembered, that when the discovery was made the colony was in a state of general and almost unexampled prosperity, and when, consequently, the temptation to relinquish a bird in the hand for the sake of running after two in the bush, was not likely to be very maddening in its effects.

“It is not quite ten months since our auriferous treasures were first brought to light, yet within that brief period the colonies of New South Wales and Victoria have each shipped about one million’s worth of gold, or two million’s worth in all. And when it is considered that this has been the produce of unskilled mining, of labour untrained to the peculiar employment, untaught by science, unsustained by capital; that, in our own colony at least, the number of diggers has ever borne the most insignificant proportion to the extent and richness of the field, and that every day new regions



of auriferous deposit are found in almost every part of the interior, to the north and to the south, as well as to the west, our friends at home may form some estimate as to what Australia is to achieve hereafter, with a population less inadequate to the work she has to do, with the lights of science and experience to direct her operations, and with the aid of capital to give fair scope to her energies.

“And we rejoice to add, that this million of gold produced in New South Wales has been gathered without any serious detriment to our other interests, and with the least possible disturbance of public order and tranquillity. Our cornfields have still been cultivated, our sheep have still been shorn. Our metropolitan city remains a busy scene of commerce, and stately edifices are rising up in her streets. Our mining operations have assumed the character of settled industry; our gold is collected without bustle or confusion, and securely carried to market by the regularly established Government escorts, at a moderate expense to its proprietors; while the quantities brought to town and shipped for exportation are as systematically reported in the newspapers as those of any other of our raw productions. The admirable order which has all along been maintained at our diggings, not by military restraints, but by the good sense

and moral rectitude of the great mass of the diggers themselves, is indeed a just cause of pride to the colonists, and ought to encourage thousands of our fellow-subjects at home to come over and help us.

“ We need their help; our flocks and herds are increasing, while the labour-market is exhausted. Wages have consequently advanced at rates averaging on the whole somewhere about thirty per cent. We have ample employment for many thousands of British immigrants, provided they be men who can really give a good day's work for a good day's wage. We do not want loungers; neither do we want any more of that swarming class of young gentlemen who can do nothing but sit on a stool and handle the quill. Of these we have always more than enough. But persons accustomed to hard work, whether mechanical or rural, and persons having money to invest, whether of large amount or small, will find in New South Wales a finer opening than any other part of the world presents, and than was ever before presented by any colony under the British Crown. Let them remember that for mildness and salubrity our climate cannot be surpassed; that our soil is capable of producing all that man requires for sustenance, and most of the luxuries that he prizes; and that at the time our gold fields were

discovered, the colony, with a population of less than 200,000 souls, possessed above 100,000 horses, 1,500,000 horned cattle, and more than 8,000,000 sheep; yielding an annual revenue of 600,000*l.*, and exported of her own produce or manufactures to the extent of 1,100,000*l.* per annum, altogether irrespective of her gold. Coupling these facts with the 'great fact' mentioned above, that in ten months we have shipped a million's worth of our new-found product, the fruit of peaceful industry, and the earnest of a still brighter future, our friends in England must admit that our shores have strong attractions for all who think it better to emigrate than to stay at home."



## CHAPTER V.

GENERAL FEATURES OF THE AUSTRALIAN CONTINENT—ITS SITUATION ON THE GLOBE—ITS MOUNTAINS AND RIVERS—ITS BOTANY AND ZOOLOGY—THE ABORIGINAL INHABITANTS, THEIR MANNERS AND CUSTOMS.

THE data in our possession for forming an accurate estimate of the general features of the continent itself are extremely meagre. The surface is too extended and the explored portion too small to allow us with safety to hazard any general conclusions. The prevailing features, so far as they have yet been observed, have been barren and wooded plains, traversed by long ridges of precipitous but not very lofty mountains, and rivers which often spread into marshes, and do not preserve any course which may be called long, when compared with the size of the continent. There are few deep bays, nor does the sea receive any river, so far as yet discovered, whose magnitude corresponds with that of the land. Notwithstanding the spirited efforts lately made, it is still only a corner of the interior of this huge mass of land that is at all known. A great part of this, through the

mixture of broad mountain masses and heavy inundated plains, is rendered unfit for cultivation, and even for travelling; but these obstructions, however, do not prevent the occurrence on a large scale of fine tracts of pasturage, where the richest herbage grows spontaneously, and of fertile soil from which industry may raise the most plentiful crops of every kind of cereal produce.

The Australian continent lies wholly within the southern hemisphere. Its most northern point is Cape York, which is  $10^{\circ} 42'$  south of the equator, and Cape Wilson is its most southerly one, which is  $39^{\circ} 9'$  south latitude; the breadth of the continent between these points is upwards of 2,000 miles, but the average breadth is not more than about 1,200. The most westerly point of the Australian mainland is  $113^{\circ}$ , and the most eastern  $153^{\circ} 47'$  east longitude, and its greatest dimensions in this direction are equal to 2,400 miles. The superficial extent of Australia is about three millions of square miles, an area of more than four-fifths as great as that of Europe.

The hilly portions of Australia, so far as at present known, appear to be confined to the neighbourhood of the coasts, or to extend a short distance inland, while the interior spreads out into low and flat plains. The highest mountains yet explored are in the south-east, and are

called the Australian Alps, which form a continuous chain, lying at a distance of from sixty to seventy miles from the coast. The highest measured peak of the Australian Alps is Mount Koskinsko, and is 6,500 feet above the level of the sea. Its summit, even at this moderate elevation, is much above the snow line, and all the higher portions of the chain are covered with perpetual snow. To the northward of the Australian Alps, chains of mountains extend along the whole of the eastern coast, but the only portions which have been explored are the Blue Mountains and the Liverpool range.

The Blue Mountains present on the eastern side a precipitous and inaccessible character. They tower up almost like a wall, their cliffs being so steep and separated by such dreadful abysses as to have been long considered as presenting a barrier absolutely impassable. It was not till 1813 that a route was discovered through them; but at that time the absolute necessity of finding pasturage for the immensely increased stock of sheep and cattle, roused the active energy of the colonists to endeavour to penetrate the barrier which stood between them and the interior. They found on the western side a series of well-watered downs, affording pasturage for millions of sheep; the lands were speedily occupied, and towns and villages sprang

into existence there. And it is in the basin on the western side thus discovered, bounded on the east and south by the Blue Mountains and the Australian Alps, and by the unknown interior to the north-west, that that unexampled supply of gold, the ultimate effect of the discovery of which is affording a new problem to the world, has been so recently found.

The Liverpool range stretches to the northward of the Blue Mountains, and is in many places equally rugged. Its summits are from 2,000 to 4,000 feet in elevation. Mount Lindesay, situated further to the north, is, 5,700 feet in altitude, and there are many other points in the neighbourhood of the east coast, which are probably of equal elevation.

There are a large number of rivers on the coast-line of Australia, but, as has been already mentioned, few have yet been discovered which bear anything like a proportion to the size of continent. The most extensive system of rivers at present discovered in the continent belongs to the basin of the Murray, which drains a large tract of the south-eastern portion of the interior. The river Murray rises on the western slope of the Australian Alps, and after flowing for the greater part of its course in a westerly direction, turns to the south, and enters the sea at Encounter Bay, passing through a shallow

marsh, called Lake Alexandrina. This lake or marsh presents to the eye a fine sheet of water, twenty-seven miles long by twenty-three broad, but unfortunately its depth is only from six to nine feet, and the channel by which its waters communicate with the sea is exceedingly narrow and dangerous; in fact, the lake appears to be in gradual process of filling up. During the western part of the course of the river it receives the waters of the Murrumbidgee (with its affluent the Lachlan) and the Darling, the latter of which in its upper portion collects the waters of numerous tributary streams. All of these rivers flow from the western side of the Blue Mountains or other ranges of the east coast, and have their upper courses directed towards the interior of the continent. The length of the Murray exceeds 1,200 miles, and it is navigable for upwards of 700. A premium of two thousand pounds was offered by the Government of South Australia for the first steam vessel placed, under certain conditions, upon its waters, but up to the date of the publication of this work no information had been received in this country that the reward had been claimed. There can be but little doubt, however, that the waters of the Murray will ere long re-echo the sound of the paddles of many steamers.



The Australian continent has been described as the land of anomalies. It is summer there when it is winter in Europe, and day with them when it is night with us; the barometer rises before bad weather, and falls before good; the north is the hot wind, and the south the cold; the humblest house is fitted up with cedar, the fields are fenced with mahogany, and myrtle-trees are burnt for fuel; the swans are black, and the eagles white; the kangaroo, an animal between the squirrel and the deer, has five claws on its fore paws, and three talons, like those of a bird, on its hind legs, and yet hops on its tail; the mole (*Ornithorhynchus paradoxus*) lays eggs, and has a duck's bill; the crabs are of an ultramarine colour; there is a bird with a broom in its mouth, instead of a tongue; there are insects which are called, from their appearance and habits, "the walking leaves," and there are fish which are amphibious, leaping over the ground by the aid of their strong spiny fins. The coal district is the most fertile; the bees are stingless; the beautiful flowers for the most part scentless; and the rich plumaged birds are songless—the one which makes the nearest approach to melody being called "the laughing jackass." Weeds in this country become gigantic trees there; the trees are, with one exception, evergreens—

the leaves of most of them are set edgeways, instead of horizontally, and some of them shed their bark instead of their leaves; and, while there is, naturally, a total absence of any vegetable production fit for the ordinary food of man, the soil is capable of producing every variety of corn, fruit, or vegetable, whether European or Tropical, which can be planted upon it.

Upwards of 5,700 different plants are known to exist in Australia, and of these only 270 are common to other countries, so that upwards of 5,400 are altogether peculiar to its extraordinary soil. Ferns, nettles, flowers, and grasses, having the form, bulk, and habits of trees, are abundant; hard timber, with rosewood, sandalwood, and cedar, is plentiful. Some trees yield the purest gums, while the leaves of others are used as tea. The sassafras and castor-oil plant have been discovered. On the northern coasts palms flourish abundantly, and the tropical mangrove exists in those parts nearest the Indian Islands.

With one exception all the trees of Australia are evergreen. No dense woods have been found, and the groves, from a peculiar arrangement of their foliage, present a strange appearance—many of the trees having their leaves hanging with the edge downward. Flowering

plants of excessive beauty are found; and the lily, tulip, and honeysuckle grow to the size of large standard trees. There are many odoriferous shrubs, which scent the air to a considerable distance. In the interior immense numbers of prickly plants cover the ground, binding down the loose soil, and preventing that drift



TROPICAL VEGETATION.

which distinguishes the deserts of Arabia and Africa from the Australian wastes. Although

large and excellent pastures form a prominent feature in the aspect of the country, yet a heavy English sward is seldom found. Flax, tobacco, a species of cotton, tares, indigo, chicory, trefoil, and burnet (an excellent substitute for tea), are natural productions. No native trees bearing edible fruit have been found. The peppermint-tree affords an oil efficacious in cholera; the leaves of the tea-plant are not much inferior to those of China; and the bark of the wattle is useful for tanning. European fruits, however, supply the absence of indigenous specimens: the grape, the apple, the peach, the cherry, the apricot, the nectarine, the greengage, the pear, the mulberry, the raspberry, the gooseberry, the currant, the strawberry, the quince, the walnut, the chestnut, all thrive remarkably well—some of them requiring no care whatever in their cultivation. The larger number of European vegetables thrive in the Australian colonies equally as well as the fruits. Most of the Australian trees are of hard wood, but a very large number are of great utility for ship-building, and also for ordinary and ornamental purposes. Many of the trees are remarkable for their vast height, or enormous dimensions. The *Eucalyptus globulus* of La Billardièrè (principally found in Van Diemen's Land) has been observed to

attain a height of 150 feet, with a girth near the base of from 25 to 40 feet. Lieutenant Breton mentions one which he saw of a triangular form, one face of which was 18 feet in width, another  $19\frac{1}{2}$ , and the third  $22\frac{1}{2}$ , giving a total girth of 60 feet; and at Illawarra there



FERN-TREES.

is a resting-place for travellers, half-way up the mountain, called the *Big tree*, which, although the greater part has been consumed by

fire, is still 100 feet high, and three men on horseback may ride into the hollow of the tree without dismounting, and there take shelter. The New Holland lily grows to the height of 20 or 25 feet, bearing on its crown blossoms of the richest crimson, each six inches in diameter, from which beautiful birds sip a delicious honey; the leaves are very numerous, sword-shaped, and sometimes six feet long. Several specimens of the extraordinary nettle-tree are 20 feet in height, of proportionately robust habit, and its leaves so highly stimulating as to blister severely on the slightest touch. The fern-trees are also remarkable, and extremely beautiful; their rough stems rising to the height of from 15 to 20 feet, and then throwing out a number of leaves in every direction, each 5 or 6 feet, or more, in length, and exactly similar in appearance to those of the common fern.

The Zoology of Australia is more singular than beautiful. It possesses no large animals, and but few varieties; and the attention is much more likely to be arrested by the peculiar habits and structure of the subjects themselves, than by the elegance of their forms, or the richness of their colours. As we have already mentioned, Australia has been termed the land of anomalies, and the zoology of the continent

is certainly no exception to the fact; for Nature, in the creation of such forms as she appropriated to this region, seems to have determined to mark them with some peculiar character inconsistent with those rules she had adopted in the formation of all her other productions. That form, for instance, which in other parts of the world she has confined to the smallest races of quadrupeds—the rats and the dormice—is here bestowed upon the kangaroos, the largest tribe of four-footed animals yet discovered on this continent; but these wonderful creatures, instead of fabricating warm and skilful nests beneath the earth, for the protection of their young, in like manner to all other mouse-like quadrupeds, are provided with a natural nest in the folds of their own skin, where the young are sheltered and protected, until they are able to provide for themselves. The great kangaroo is, in fact, the largest and most typical quadruped of the whole Australasian range: the total absence of such animals as lions, tigers, deer, oxen, horses, bears—in short, of all those races spread over the rest of the world, is the most striking feature in the zoology of this continent. It is further remarkable that nearly all the quadrupeds either actually belong, or are intimately related to the *Glires* of Linnæus. Two-thirds of the Australian quadrupeds make their

way by springing in the air. It may also be mentioned that out of fifty-eight species of mammalia found in Australia, forty-six are peculiar to it, and twelve only are found in other regions. Even out of these twelve, four are seals, and five are whales. As already indicated, however, kangaroos are almost the only important animals: there are many varieties of this animal, from the "kangaroo mouse," which is about the size of a small rabbit, to the "forester," which stands from four to five feet high. The bound of the kangaroo is prodigious, sometimes exceeding twenty paces; and this can be kept up for a considerable time, so as to enable the animal to distance the swiftest greyhound. Within the marsupial pouch the careful mother shelters her helpless young, letting them out by day to graze on the tender herbage, or carefully conveying them across rivers or through forests, when pursued by her enemies, until they are able to provide for their own sustenance and safety. The kangaroo has rarely more than two at a birth, and is an extremely timid animal, unless when hard pressed for life, when it will set its back against a tree, boldly await the dogs, and rip them up with its hind claws, or give them a formidable squeeze with its fore-arms, until the blood gushes from the hound's nostrils. Sometimes



the poor creature will take to the water, and drown every dog that comes near it. It is, however, extremely docile, and, with a little trouble, can be brought to follow its owner about the house or garden like a dog, eat out of the hand, and made as tractable and interesting as any other "pet" animal.

One of the most remarkable animals in Australia is the platypus (*Ornithorhynchus paradoxus*)—it has four legs, but has a bill exactly similar to that of a duck; lays eggs, and suckles its young. Its length from beak to tail is about fourteen inches, the circumference of the body eleven inches, beak two and a half, tail four and a half. It resembles the otter, though of inferior size; is covered with a very thick, soft, and beaver-like fur; the head is flat and rather small; and the legs short, terminating in a broad web, which on the fore feet extends nearly an inch beyond the claws. It is very shy, and only found in unfrequented places. It swims low in the water, frequently in company with the musk duck, and dives very rapidly. This very singular animal exhibits more decided indications of an union between the two great divisions of the vertebrata, than any quadruped yet known.

Birds are numerous, of great variety, and often of a beautiful plumage. The Emu, or

cassowary, is one of the most singular; its covering is more like hair than feathers, and from its being confined to the earth, the creature partakes little of the character of a bird; it is extremely fleet, outstripping the swiftest dog, and it kicks with such violence as to be



EMU.

able to break a man's leg: it is, however, easily tamed, and becomes as domestic as a dog. From

six to eighteen eggs have been found in one nest, and they are of stronger flavour than those of the ostrich. A portion of the emu is considered good eating, the flesh tasting like beef; but other portions are very oily and disagreeable. It is rapidly disappearing from the occupied districts.

The gigantic crane is a stately bird, about six feet high, of a pale ash colour, with a reddish tinge on the head: it is frequently seen on the borders of lakes and rivers, where also the black swan is found. The bustard, or native turkey, weighs from fifteen to eighteen pounds, and is good eating. Eagles and hawks are numerous: some of them white and very large, the eagle-hawk measuring nine feet from wing to wing, and feathered to the toes. The pigeons and doves are certainly the most beautiful in the world; the general tint of their plumage is a rich green, variegated with red, purple, or yellow about the head and breast; but others occur of a brown colour, relieved by spots on the wings of the richest colours, equal in brilliancy to the finest gems. The beautiful parrots, parakeets, and cockatoos deserve notice also from their variety and brilliancy of plumage, their large numbers, as also from the facility with which the latter in particular are domesticated and learn to imitate sounds. Some of the

cockatoos are of a milk-white, others black, richly variegated on the tail with red, and with superb crests. There are a large number of



LYRE-TAILED PHEASANT.

other extremely interesting birds, which it is not within our limits to enumerate or describe.

We, however, spare space for an illustration of that singular and beautiful bird, the lyre-tailed pheasant.

Insects are very numerous, and of every variety, and have long afforded to the entomologist a wide field for examination. Locusts are common in some parts of the continent; butterflies are neither plentiful nor beautiful; of bees there are three kinds, the principal of which is not larger than a common-sized winged ant, and all of them are destitute of stings; these careful providers form their nests in the hollows of trees and rocks, and produce a large quantity of delicious wild honey. English bees have been introduced, and are multiplying fast. Ants exhibit several varieties, of which the largest, called the "gigantic," measures nearly an inch in length: their mounds are not raised so high as those of the ants in Africa, but they are more solid and compact. Flies are a great nuisance in summer, and one species in particular, called the blow-fly, taints and putrifies everything it touches. Mosquitoes have a particular partiality for new-comers, whom they attack for a short time with more than special eagerness, but they are gradually disappearing before civilization. Spiders are very large; one species in particular makes its nest in the earth five or six inches in depth, and with a

door over it which is always left open when he is at home and "on hospitable cares intent."

Reptiles are not at all in such numbers as are to be found in marshy countries. There are several varieties of snakes, a few of which are poisonous. They are attacked and killed by the settlers wherever they are seen, and are gradually becoming scarce in the settled districts. They are generally small, and always glide away as rapidly as possible at the approach of a human footstep. The only danger from them is by accidentally treading on them when in the bush, when they will turn and bite; but this is a danger easily avoided by not travelling without high boots.

Fish are plentiful along the coast, but few are found in the rivers, especially those on the east side of the Blue Mountains, owing perhaps to the rapidity of their currents. Whales frequently come into the bays to calve; and seals are found in many of the coves, especially to the southward. The cod-fish (so called) is taken in the fresh-water rivers west of the Blue Mountains in great quantities and of a large size, some of them weighing as much as 70 lbs. They are delicious eating, as are also the eels, which are caught of the weight of from 12 to 20 lbs. Perch, covered with scales and prickly fins, abound on the east coast rivers,

and in flavour and juiciness bear a great resemblance to the sole. There are many varieties of other fish, including an abundance of delicious oysters, which are so plentiful in the harbour of Port Jackson that the rocks are not only literally covered with them, but they are found adhering to the twigs of the trees which overhang the water; which has given rise to the statement that, in addition to the other anomalies which Australia presents to us, the oysters are there found growing on the trees.

The aboriginal inhabitants of Australia belong to the class of Papuas, or oriental negroes. They have the thick prominent lips, white teeth, and, in Van Diemen's Land, the woolly hair of the African negro; but the nose is less flat, and the limbs much leaner. The theories of those philosophers who have represented man in the savage state as in the perfection of his being, and his evils as arising from the artificial arrangements of society, find here their most ample refutation. All idea respecting the fabled innocence of the state of nature must vanish on beholding the New Hollander. The state of nature is indeed complete. There is no society, no government, no laws; each man acts according to his own fancy and caprice. The arts of life exist in their first and rudest elements. The people were found unacquainted

either with planting, or with the breeding of tame animals, and deriving their support solely from hunting and fishing. Those in the interior subsist by collecting the roots and berries which grow spontaneously, pursuing and laying snares for the squirrel and opossum, and even



NATIVE GUNGAN.

devouring worms and grubs that are found in the trunks of trees. Their huts are of the rudest possible description, resembling the dens



of wild beasts; they consist often of the bark of a single tree, bent in the middle and placed on its two ends in the ground, affording shelter to only one miserable tenant; at other times two or three pieces of bark arranged upon a few sticks stuck into the ground, will afford a hovel into which six or eight persons may creep; these habitations they call "gungahs." They often, however, content themselves with cavities in or under the shelter of rocks, which in well chosen situations form their most comfortable abodes. They are able to strike fire by rubbing two pieces of dry grass-tree together; and they light their fire, when they require one for cooking, opposite to the entrance of their gungah, which they take care to construct so that the smoke is driven in the opposite direction; should the wind shift, they immediately, and in a very few minutes' time, alter the position of their habitation accordingly.

They roam about entirely naked, with the exception of a girdle round the middle, and occasionally a skin thrown over the shoulders. In the neighbourhood of the towns, however, they are furnished by the Government with blankets, and also occasionally obtain from the settlers articles of left-off clothing, in which they envelope themselves. They are by no

means insensible to ornament, and will coat their skin thickly with fish oil, regardless of the horrible stench which it emits, and adorn themselves with such trinkets as the teeth of the kangaroo, the jaw-bones of large fishes, and the tails of dogs; and they also occasionally thrust a bone through the nose, which they believe to be efficacious in keeping away the "deble debel."

The females are mere slaves, doing all the work which is essential for their "lords'" comfort; and female children are looked upon with contempt, and very frequently destroyed, which is one great reason for the gradual diminution of their numbers. The ladies generally carry their infants in a bag thrown over the shoulder, but they occasionally dispense with the bag, and simply throw the child itself over the shoulder, holding it by one leg, while the head of the "lovely innocent" hangs down at the back, swinging about like a human pendulum. At the age of fourteen or fifteen they attain puberty; and the young men undergo the important ceremony of having two of the front teeth of the upper jaw extracted or knocked out, which has the effect, according to their notions, of making "men" of them; and as a consolation for this barbarous infliction, they are then at liberty to take a wife; which latter

affair is arranged by the youth going to a neighbouring tribe, and on seeing a damsel to suit his taste, commencing his courtship at once. This he does in a summary manner, by greeting his intended with a blow or two with a "waddy" upon the skull, which in these people is so remarkably thick that but little permanent or injurious effect is produced by the operation. Should a blow or two not be sufficient, he continues the process until his "ladye love" becomes insensible; he then seizes her, and drags her to his own habitation, and the "happy couple" are forthwith united. Should he take a fancy to more than one, their laws do not forbid him to indulge himself with half-a-dozen or more; but the former ones are generally allotted to other less fortunate youths, who may be lingering in single blessedness from the scarcity of the "sex."

The men are first-rate shots and good riders, and their senses of sight, hearing, and smelling are so acute, that they are able to track a person over hard rocky ground where no trace whatever would present itself to an European eye; to tell whether anything is moving for an immense distance round; and they can tell by smelling at a tree whether an opossum is lodged in its trunk or branches. They have a few very peculiar superstitious notions, the principal one of

which must evidently have been only of modern origin: it is, that after death they immediately reappear on the earth as white people—to use their own expression, “they fall down black fellows and jump up white fellows;” and many amusing instances are related by the colonists of their having been continually pestered by the affectionate embracings of some native “mamma,” who fancied she had traced in their lineaments the features of some son or other relative she had recently lost. They are exceedingly indolent, and it is with great difficulty that any of them can be persuaded to perform the simplest kind of labour, although they are aware of the value of money and anxious to possess it. To such an extent is this carried, that even at the gold diggings, they will stand by calmly looking on at the energetic operations of the miners, and with a perfect knowledge of the value of the metal they are procuring, but without evidencing the smallest inclination to participate in the search. Neither will they, if any colonist should take the trouble to teach them the art of planting food, either believe in his instructions, or wait the time necessary for the attainment of the product. Dr. Mackenzie mentions as a proof of this, that a friend of his gave some potato cuttings to one of them, telling him that if he planted them he would soon obtain young

potatoes from them. The black fellow went and put them beneath the ground and watched them carefully for two days, at the end of which he went to his instructor, and told him with much chagrin that the potatoes had not yet "jumped up," and inquired if they would "jump up" in two days more, and on being told it would probably be as many days as he had fingers, he at once dug up the cuttings and ate them, saying that "white fellow was all gammon." None of the efforts which have yet been made appear to have had the effect of giving them the slightest relish or desire for the comforts or advantages of civilization;—the blacks who lounge about the streets of Sydney never, in any instance, appear to emulate anything but the vices of the lowest class of society; they are servile, cringing, cunning, and dissipated whenever they have the opportunity of indulging in dissipation.

Widely different, however, from these, are the wild inhabitants of the forest, roaming at freedom over the immeasurable plains, bearing on their shoulders their weapons of war or of chase, yielding submission to no human power, and with a characteristic elasticity of movement, firmness of step, and dignity of gait, proclaiming, not in words but in every gesture, their hereditary rights and independence.

Dr. Mackenzie mentions it as his decided opinion, that if any remnant of the race can be saved from that gradual process of extermination to which they appear at present doomed, and brought over to a civilized condition, it can be only by the efforts of some of those missionaries of apostolic zeal, unconquerable enterprise, and imperturbable self-denial, who, like Mr. Elliott with the Red Indians of North America, will join themselves to the camps of the aborigines, study their language, follow them in their wanderings, live on roots, grubs, and opossums like themselves, and gradually make an impression upon their feelings, habits, and manners, until they begin to recognise the truth of Christianity and the benefits of a civilized state of existence.

## CHAPTER VI.

THE GOLD REGIONS—THEIR DISCOVERY AND RICHNESS—STATE OF SOCIETY PRODUCED—THE “YIELD” FROM THE MINES—PROBABLE POLITICAL AND SOCIAL EFFECTS OF THE DISCOVERY.

WE have from time to time, in those chapters which relate to the separate colonies, mentioned the general mineralogical features of each, but the subject of gold—“yellow, precious, glittering gold”—we mentioned as being reserved for special consideration.

The discovery of the prolific richness of the Australian gold fields has, in the course of a short twelve months, produced a complete revolution in the feelings of the public with regard to these colonies and their affairs and fortunes. It was not enough that they possessed enormous tracts of fertile land where, the seed being planted, magnificent crops sprang up to gladden the heart of the husbandman, almost without his care; it was not enough that immeasurable plains afforded rich pasturage for myriads of sheep and cattle which seemed to cry from the boiling-vats in which they were being wasted by millions, for mouths to come over and eat

them; it was not enough that the useful metals were found cropping out from the surface and requiring only to be gathered up; it was not enough that, while in the home country squalidness and poverty were the lot of the many, and even persevering ability could not ensure a sufficiency of food, and while gaols for crime and gaols for misfortune were both filled to overflowing, a teeming and beautiful land was on the other side holding out its magnificent bribes to tempt the unfortunates at home to cross the watery bridge which separated them from happiness and plenty—all appeared to be indifferent to the “voice of the charmer.” Once in about twelve months an article would appear recommending a little emigration as a palliative for some portion of that misery which the legislature could not alleviate or prevent, and a ship or two would be put on now and then, lazily waiting week after week for its complement of passengers; but there was no vivid general recognition of the advantages presented by such magnificent possessions, nor any general willingness or inclination to pay the necessary “toll” over the bridge which led to them.

But a land where *gold* is to be had for the picking up, has roused alike the attention of the press and the legislature, the avarice of the capitalist, the enterprise of the merchant, and the



anxious desire of all who are suffering here from lack of a sufficiency. The Gold Regions of Australia are the universal theme of contemplation and discussion. Ships for the diggings, good, bad, or indifferent, fill as fast as the brokers can engage them. Steamers of the greatest magnitude are adding their powerful and rapid assistance to the means of transit, and even "return tickets" are advertised for conveying the curious traveller to the Antipodes and back in the course of a few months' pleasant trip. Books, lectures, and panoramic exhibitions to inform the public as to the features of the golden land are "plentiful as blackberries." Advertisements by the page inform the emigrant where he can best procure every possible thing he may require, from a nail to a steam quartz crushing machine, and the whole country is in a state of feverish excitement.

The actual discovery of gold in Australia, however, can scarcely be said to be a recent one. In December, 1829, it is mentioned in a Sydney paper, that a piece of gold in the quartz matrix had been bought by Mr. Cohen, a silversmith, from a labouring man, whose surprise is described as great on his receiving its proper value in money. For several years afterwards, a shepherd named M'Gregor, perhaps the same individual, was in the habit of occasionally

bringing pieces of gold to Sydney, by the sale of which he is said not merely to have supplied his immediate wants, but to have realized at one time a considerable property. He repeatedly offered to reveal the fortunate locality (which was supposed to lie in the Wellington district) to respectable persons, for the consideration of a large reward; but his honesty seems to have been questioned, as his conditions were never acceded to. Whether his supply had failed him or not, is doubtful, but he certainly was, at the time of the late discoveries, in gaol for debt.

The Rev. W. B. Clarke, of St. Leonard's parish, whose ability as a geologist, as well as in other departments of science, is well known and acknowledged in New South Wales, brought specimens of the metal in 1841 from the basin of the very river (the Macquarie) now supplying it, and he has also repeatedly announced his conviction that gold existed in considerable abundance in the "schists and quartzites" of the mountain chain. In consequence of communications made by him to the Geological Society, Sir Roderick Murchison, in a letter addressed to Sir Charles Lemon, advised that a person well acquainted with the washing of mineral sands be sent to Australia, speculating on the probability of auriferous alluvia being

abundant, and suggested "that such would be found at the base of the western flanks of the dividing ranges."

The following passage from the *Quarterly Review* of Sept. 1850, will show the opinion these gentlemen had formed, at that time, of the probable capabilities of the country :—

"The important point for Englishmen now to consider, is, the extent to which our own great Australian Colonies are likely to become gold-bearing regions. The work of Count Strzelecki, and others, having made known the facts, that the chief or eastern ridge of that continent consists of palæozoic rocks, cut through by syenites, granites, and porphyries; and that quartzose rocks occasionally prevail in this long meridian chain, Sir Roderick Murchison announced, first to the Geographical Society, and afterwards to the Geological Society of Cornwall, his belief that wherever such contrasts occurred, gold might be expected to be found; Colonel Helmersen suggested the same idea at St. Petersburg. Very shortly afterwards, not only were several specimens of gold in fragments of quartz veins found in the Blue Mountains, north of Sydney, but one of the British Chaplains, himself a good geologist, in writing more recently, thus expresses himself :—' This colony is becoming a mining

country, as well as South Australia. Copper, lead, and gold, are in considerable abundance in the schists and quartzites of the Cordillera (Blue Mountains, &c.) Vast numbers of the population are going to California, but some day, I think, we shall have to recal them.'

"Mr. Montgomery Martin, in a pamphlet, published in 1847, says:—'Sir Thomas Mitchell, in his recent expedition to the north-east, found a region like the Uralian Mountains, abounding in gold. The specimens I have seen of the gold are very rich. It is in large grains, or irregular veins, loosely embedded in white quartz.'"

About the beginning of 1849, a very fine specimen of gold in quartz was brought to Melbourne, Port Phillip, where, in March of that year, it was shown by M. La Trobe, the Superintendent, to Sir Charles Fitz Roy, the Governor of New South Wales. This specimen was said to have been found by a shepherd in the "Pyrenees," a day or two's journey from the town, and mysterious stories were current as to his disappearance, it being supposed that he had been induced to leave the colony by some person who had bought the secret. The general feeling, however, on the subject was one of incredulity; and many who were supposed to have some knowledge of mineralogy, declared

their belief that the specimen in question was an artful fabrication.

Speculations were often hazarded among persons interested in the subject, as to the probability of the colony becoming a gold-producing country, and even confident assertions made, that if washing the alluvial deposits in the streams or gullies flowing from the supposed auriferous ridges were practised, gold, in dust, would certainly be procured. Strange to say, however, so simple an experiment was never tried by those most concerned, in spite of Californian experience, and, consequently, in society generally, the majority of persons, slow to believe in the possibility of a change so important, whenever the subject of gold-mining was mentioned, spoke of it with a sneer, as a kind of absurd speculation.

On the 2d of May, 1851, a notice appeared in the *Sydney Morning Herald*, (the leading paper of the colony,) intimating that it was no longer a secret that gold had been found in the earth, in several places in the western country, and that the fact was first established on the 12th of February, by Mr. E. H. Hargraves, a resident of Brisbane Water, who had returned from California a few months previously. It was added, that while in California, Mr. Hargraves felt persuaded that, from the similarity

of the geological formation, there must be gold in several districts of New South Wales, and when he returned his expectations were fulfilled.

On the 8th May, Mr. Hargraves delivered a lecture in Bathurst, when he publicly announced his discoveries, stating, that after a careful examination of from two to three months, he had found that one large gold field existed from the foot of the "Big Hill" to a considerable distance below Wellington; that the precious metal had been picked up in numberless places, and that indications of its existence were to be seen in every direction. So satisfied was he on the point, that he had established a company of nine working miners, who were then actively employed digging at a point of the Summer-hill Creek, near its junction with the Macquarie, about fifty miles from Bathurst, and thirty from Guyong, and that the name of "Ophir" had been given to the spot.

Mr. Hargraves exhibited to the people present samples of gold weighing, in all, about four ounces, the produce, he stated, of three days' work. The amount thus earned by each man, he represented to be 2*l.* 4*s.* 8*d.* per day; but he observed, that from want of practical knowledge and proper implements, he was convinced that nearly one half of the gold actually

dug had been lost, owing to the labour having been performed in his absence. From the nature of some of the country explored by him,



SUMMER-HILL CREEK.

he was of opinion that gold would be found in mass, and would not be surprised if pieces of thirty or forty pounds should be discovered.

The fact of the existence of gold in the Summer-hill Creek having been thus made known to the public, digging immediately commenced. On the 10th May, two days after

Mr. Hargrave's meeting, three persons left Bathurst, and on the 12th, two of them returned, bringing one piece of gold which weighed down thirty-five sovereigns, another of about half an ounce in weight, and several small pieces, which might weigh half an ounce altogether. The largest piece was described as of solid gold, about three inches long, and of varying thickness, with a small portion of quartz embedded in its thickest part, and the smallest as like spangles, but rough and uneven on the edges. On the following day, two pounds and a half of gold, in lumps, besides a quantity of dust, were brought into Bathurst, which, of course, induced the formation of parties for mining, and the construction of machines, &c. for washing the soil.

On the 16th May, the arrival in Sydney of the specimens mentioned above caused a great sensation; and on the 17th, the report of Mr. Stutchbury, the government geologist, reached the government. This report was so conclusive as to the existence of gold in large quantities, that a proclamation which had been prepared for some time, was immediately issued, declaring the right of the Crown in all precious metals, and prohibiting all persons from searching for or carrying off the same, except under regulations which were to be shortly promulgated.



These, which were framed in some degree on the Californian model, were published a day or two afterwards, and insisted principally on a charge or licence-fee of thirty shillings, which was to be paid by every individual applying for permission to search for the precious metals, for every calendar month, or part of a month, to a land commissioner, appointed to receive it, who was also to have power of allotting small portions of Crown land to each worker, and of settling disputes as to conflicting claims, &c. On private lands no persons but the proprietors, or such as they might authorize, were to be allowed to work, but all were to provide themselves with licences.

The excitement in Sydney was kept up by occasional accounts of great success on the part of individuals. On the 24th May, very favourable intelligence was received from the gold-diggers, many of whom wrote to their friends that they were making 3*l.* or 4*l.* a-day. One party of four was said to have taken out thirty ounces in one day, and a piece of one pound weight had been found. A letter, said to be from a person of undoubted veracity, stated that one man had, within three weeks, accumulated 1,600*l.* worth of gold! It was also stated that, whatever might be the desponding accounts of some disappointed adventurers, the

fact was certain, that a large quantity of gold was lying in the bank at Bathurst, waiting a safe conveyance to Sydney, and that the whole of Mr. Wentworth's property near Bathurst (Fitzgerald's Valley) was found to be one large gold-field.



OPHIR.

The excitement produced by these accounts was very great, and, as might be expected, there was a general rush from all parts of the

colony to the locality of Bathurst to dig for gold, many of the parties only provided with a pocket knife, and a tin mug, and many even without these rude implements, fancying, perhaps, that lumps, large as eggs, were lying about ready to be picked up and pocketed. When the news reached the colony of Victoria, an equal degree of excitement was produced there also, and every vessel that could be spared was instantly laid on to convey the population from Melbourne and Geelong to Sydney. All existing interests in New South Wales appeared to be in danger of disorganization, while the sister colonies were threatened with depopulation and absolute ruin. In order to prevent, if possible, these results, the corporate bodies connected with the various principal towns and districts offered considerable rewards for the discovery of gold in their own immediate localities; and as the knowledge gradually spread that one part of the great Australian Cordillera was as likely to yield gold as another, a large number of exploring parties was soon eagerly engaged in the search. The result was beyond the most sanguine expectation. One locality after another was tested and found *not* wanting, and the richness of the latter discoveries outshone that of the former.

But the discoveries in the Colony of Victoria

were the most astounding. When the inhabitants of that colony were in the full tide of emigration from Melbourne to Sydney with the intention of rushing to the Bathurst diggings, the news was suddenly promulgated, not only that the reward offered by the corporation had met with a claimant, but that the Buninyong range, the gold locality there, was actually far richer in its yield than the Blue Mountains. The emigration was at once stopped, and the numerous vessels which for weeks had been employed in emptying Victoria of its inhabitants, were immediately engaged in conveying the number back again with interest. The Ballarat diggings were the first which attracted attention there, but they were speedily eclipsed by the richer produce of Mount Alexander, and in a comparatively short period, upwards of 25,000 pairs of hands were engaged in digging, washing, rocking, crushing, buying and selling gold. A letter from a gentleman at Geelong thus describes the gold-field of the Buninyong range, and the richness of its produce of the precious metal:—

“Boninyong is an inland town, about fifty miles from Geelong, and it takes its name from a high volcanic mount, called by the aboriginal term Boninyong. The gold field of which I am now writing is a spur of this mount,

which stretches out for many miles. The first Boninyong gold did not yield satisfactorily, and a proclamation of his Excellency C. J. Latrobe, promising the enforcement of thirty shillings a-month licence, disturbed the diggers, who spread over the neighbouring ranges, and by sheer accident hit upon the finest gold field ever known, within six miles of the one they had deserted, and in a continuation of the same range, on a sheep station held by Alexander Tuille, Esq. The yield of this field from the commencement was good. Individuals procured from a quarter of an ounce to an ounce per day. The yield then rose to three and four ounces per man, and the public were electrified by the news that three individuals had found twenty-seven ounces in two hours. It is true; I know the men, and helped to weigh the gold. Within a fortnight there were 8,000 men at Ballarat. Ballarat is the name of this gold field; it is the Ararat on which the ark of Victoria rested, and saved the colony. Within a week of this period the diggers turned out gold in pounds weight daily. I have seen 5*l.* refused for a lump of earth no bigger than a man's fist; I have seen two shovels-full of earth yield 60*l.* worth of gold: 7,000 ounces have been sent down to Geelong and Melbourne in one week. Nuggets are being turned up

hourly; I have seen them from a quarter of an ounce to seven pounds and a half weight. In one word, gold is an ordinary article of merchandise; and men, clad in a blue shirt and fustian trowsers, are bringing into Geelong hourly gold dust and nuggets, wrapped up in rags, old stockings, pieces of handkerchiefs, and such like, to the amount of thousands. Men are realizing from 300%. to 400%. in three or four weeks, and many of my own acquaintance, who had hardly a pound to bless themselves with three months ago, are now possessed of 700%. and 800%. a-piece. One man returned to Geelong with fifty pounds weight to his own share, the result of one month's work. From carefully drawn statistics, it is predicted, that, if the present rate of yield continue, we shall be able to export gold to the amount of five millions at least, during the ensuing twelve-month.

“Independent of Ballarat, new diggings have been discovered at Mount Alexander, equidistant between Geelong and Melbourne,\* and the yield at this latter place beggars description.

\* This statement of position is ambiguous; Mount Alexander is certainly nearly equidistant *from* Geelong and Melbourne, being about 80 or 90 miles from either, but it is not *between* them, as it is at a point forming the apex of an irregular acute triangle, on a base line drawn between the two towns, the base line being the shortest.

I have not been there, but have seen the produce of that gold field, which outrivals even Ballarat. Hundreds of pounds weight have been picked up from the surface, after a shower of rain, and a friend of mine picked up 35% worth before breakfast. It is amazing to see the quantity daily. Capitalists are pretty well cleaned out already, and the banks are charging seven per cent. discount. It is proposed to raise a company of gold purchasers amongst the townsmen and diggers. There is stated to be a ton and a half of gold on the two gold fields, awaiting escort. Independent of these gold fields, new ones are springing up daily, and the produce of gold increases with every rising sun. The whole of the soil of the Geelong and neighbouring districts is surcharged with gold. It is as the *Times* said of the Corn Laws, a '*great fact.*' Government clerks have given notice of resignation, tradesmen are abandoning their business, policemen the protection of the public; in a word, the towns are migrating to the bush. Society is convulsed, servants have become masters, the world here is so turned upside down, and nothing is talked of but gold! gold! incessantly gold, and I, smitten with the fever, can write of nothing else. I would advise all parties doing indifferently at home, to scrape all together, and immigrate to Geelong. There is

room for thousands, every chance for doing well, and no remote prospect of making fortunes. Provisions are moderate, the gold fields are within two or three days' journey of Geelong, and the inconveniency of a bush life is recompensed a thousand fold by the profits of gold digging."

An intelligent compositor, writing from Melbourne in November last, thus describes the effect of the discoveries above alluded to, and the state of affairs at that period in Melbourne:—

"Three or four weeks ago there was an overplus of printers;\* now there is not only not one out of work, but they cannot be got for love or money. There are nine wanted for government office, six for the *Argus* office, three for the *Herald*, and six for our place, the *Daily News*. You will, perhaps, be anxious to know the reason of all this; if you refer to the accompanying papers you will see that it is all owing to the 'diggings.' We have most extensive gold fields within sixty miles of us, a three days' journey, and it is to this field that most people are wending their way. In fact, such is the excitement in town, that no one is satisfied to remain behind, but off they must go to try their fortune.

"Last Saturday the armed escort came down

\* The writer only alludes to his own trade, but the same result was apparent as regards every other branch of industry.



from Mount Alexander, and so heavy was the quantity of gold sent down, that two horses could not carry it, and they were obliged to employ a dray to convey it to town. The amount was the enormous sum of 200,000*l.*, all collected (so it is said) in the course of one week. Such an amount was staggering, and it has given me even a touch of the gold fever, and I have made up my mind to join a party of three steady men who are about to go up—three who can be depended on. To this end I have written out my notice to leave, and in a fortnight from this I shall be on my way, if all is well, to the gold field. From this you will see how changeable things are here—one day here, another day there—no certainty. I know not how long we may remain at the diggings, but we take provisions for at least three months, so it is most likely you will not receive any letters from me for that time. When I return I will immediately send you word how we got on; and, if successful to any amount, will send you a good ‘nugget’ or two; if very successful, I would not mind taking a trip home again and then returning to Australia. Do not on any account make yourselves the least uneasy, as, if I am not successful, there is plenty of work in the town for the next two or three years.”

The following letter, which was addressed to Mr. Wharton, of Claywood Cottage, Sheffield, gives a still more graphic account of the effect of the gold discovery:—

“ You cannot conceive the revolution it has caused here. There are not less than 20,000 men gold digging, besides women and children, all of whom two months ago were in Melbourne or Geelong, at work in their proper trades; and now, save and except drapers, grocers, and ironmongers, we are at a dead stop. Two hands are worth five heads, and men who for a life have been slaving for 25*s.* or 20*s.* per week, are now earning 20*l.*, 30*l.*, 40*l.*, or 50*l.*, and as much as 60*l.* per week, digging up gold by pounds, picking it out in lumps with the point of a pocket-knife, and walking into a draper’s shop, and clothing their wives and children in silks and satins, or fooling and drinking away their money in a style that would startle you Sheffielders out of your senses. We are paying 3*s.* for water, where we paid 1*s.*; 1*s.* 4*d.* for bread, where we paid 8*d.*; 6*s.* for carriage, where we paid 1*s.*; and so on, all the way through; while, on the other hand, we have a ‘government escort,’ or conveyance, bringing every week into town, from the gold field, a ton of gold. We turn up our noses at California, and treat with contempt all the

other gold mines in the world. Ours lies on the surface, and after a shower of rain, you may see it with the naked eye, and a child can put in a spade, and dig that with his little hands in one minute, which many of you in England wear your eyes and heart in getting. The gold is found all over the country nearly, and there is enough to satisfy reasonably all the people that may come either in a direct or indirect way; and from the surface down to twenty feet in the ground, you may get more or less. It is a common thing to see in dozens of shop windows, and there is nothing else thought or talked of. It is worth 3*l.* 17*s.* 10*d.* in England, and has been selling here at 3*l.* 1*s.* up to 3*l.* 2*s.* 6*d.* It now has fallen to 2*l.* 14*s.* 6*d.* per ounce, because, listen,—We have not sufficient money in the colony to buy it;—there is so much of it brought, and likely to be brought, into the market. And now, you ask, what am I doing? Why, I am gold digging as soon as I can; I could not honourably go before, because I must attend to those who employ me: but now my ‘occupation’s gone,’ and I am off as soon as possible, that is, as soon as I can find a suitable party; for, in this way we all go, in companies of three, four, five, or six, or more together, for mutual protection, as well as for increased labour. The gold is found in the

bush, so all have to sleep in tents, and put up with great inconveniences, of course; but then gold pays for all, and though I don't like gold digging, yet I must do something; yet still I would rather have 1,000% a-year in town than 2,000% in the gold fields, and shall act upon this."

Letters of this kind might be selected by the hundred, but these specimens will suffice. They are more descriptively valuable than if they had been written for publication, inasmuch as they convey an idea not only of the general results of the discovery, but also show the impression produced upon individual intelligent minds. We shall now present to our readers another, and a somewhat lengthy extract, written by a gentleman who established himself at the diggings for the purpose of purchasing gold, which will enable us to form a conception of the state of society there, and of the general features of a "Life at the Diggings."

"To forward our views we rode that afternoon into Geelong, to procure various little necessities for our journey, and thus provided, set out the following morning, mounted on good horses, and carrying our baggage with us. The day was hot,—for you must remember that our November ranks with May in Europe, though more like April in its very changeable character;

there was, however, a pleasant sea breeze, which prevented the heat being oppressive, and I enjoyed the ride through a pretty park-like country, just now verdant with the young grass, but for the most part rather flat, so that on starting we could see the point of our destination in Mount Buninyong. We met with no particular adventure, the chief objects of interest being the various parties going to and coming from the Ballarat diggings, whither we were bound, great numbers being encamped in a forest about mid-way, and forming, with their temporary, gipsy-like tents, baggage-draws, and bush fires, some picturesque scenes. . . . After an early breakfast at the little inn where we spent the night, we rode seven miles through a rugged forest-road to Ballarat, till within these last few months a part almost unknown, and simply forming a portion of a sheep run occupied by Mr. Y——. The hills, of very moderate height, rise from the valley with little hollows (or gulleys as they are called) between them. Here the discovery of gold caused an accumulation of 8,000 or 10,000 people in a few weeks; and although by the time I arrived, the greater part of these had gone away again, there were still enough left to form a very curious scene, many hundreds of tents, of all sorts and sizes, being scattered about the valley in the most

irregular manner, while others, including several stores, were clustered together on one particular hill, called Golden Point, the lower part of which has been upturned and ransacked for the precious metal it contains. At a little distance this hill looks like a vast gravel pit, consisting of fine red gravel, such as you would choose, when sifted, for garden walks. On examining the ground more closely, the excavations are found to consist of square holes, all sizes and depths, from three or four feet to twenty or thirty feet. The strata are very variable and uncertain, but generally this bed of gravel lies upon a bed of whitish clay, and the gold is for the most part found in the lower part of this gravel, which is generally so firmly bound together, that it has become a hard conglomerate, which can only be broken with hammers.

“The gold is usually found in small, rounded, and evidently water-worn pieces, from the size of a pin’s head to that of peas, but now and then of much larger size. The great bulk, however, is small, and scarcely perceptible to the eye among the gravel which is taken down to the stream and washed in tin dishes and cradles. . . . . Among the rough, unshaven, dirty-looking men who were at work, I every now and then discovered some friend, who could hardly be recognised in his bush attire,

consisting generally of a blue or scarlet woollen shirt, worn outside *à-la-blouse*, with a leather belt round the waist, a straw or 'wide-awake' hat, and trowsers and thick boots of coarse materials, and all of one colour, viz. that of the clay and mud with which they are covered. Mr. W. was one of those who thus masqueraded, and addressed me without my knowing him. Among others of my acquaintance with whom I met, were lawyers, doctors, tradesmen, in fact, people of all sorts; but I noticed that generally the parties of labouring men were doing best. The success is very variable indeed; in proof of which one gentleman told me that he and his party had been working hard for six weeks, and had sunk thirteen deep holes, but got nothing. On leaving one of their holes as a failure, another party took possession of it, and in two or three days took out 720*l.* worth of gold. . . . For some time past a new district, called Mount Alexander, had been attracting a good deal of attention, and a great many had proceeded thither from Ballarat. From all I had heard, I concluded that this would be the best place for our object of purchasing gold, and therefore we proceeded there, after spending three days at Ballarat. One of these days was Sunday. It was a very wet morning, and probably owing to this no clergyman visited us,

otherwise, there is generally service. The place was very quiet and orderly, no work being done, and most men being very glad of a day of rest, after their week of toil, for gold digging is no easy occupation.

“ It was on the afternoon of the 11th of November that we strapped our baggage on to our horses, wound the leather ropes round their necks, and started for Mount Alexander, having the greater part of our money still with us. The direct distance is fifty miles, but we were too late to make a single ride of it, and slept at the house of Captain S——. Leaving Captain S——’s after breakfast, we rode at a moderate pace, thinking that we had plenty of time; but in consequence of our horses being low in condition, and losing our way, we were in our saddles till some time after dark. Our first business, on arriving at Mount Alexander, was to inquire for the tent of the Government Commissioner, where we deposited our money, as we had previously done at Ballarat, for the sake of safety. I am slightly acquainted with the Commissioner, who was very polite, gave me some information, and regretted that, owing to their small tent being full, they could not give us accommodation for the night. We therefore continued our ride for about three miles, to where the main diggings and the largest



collection of tents were, in hopes of finding some place for rest, and some grass for our horses . . . A friend with whom I happened to fall in, allowed me to creep into his tent, and having obtained the loan of a blanket, I rolled myself up in it, munched a biscuit which I had in my pocket, and then lay down on the floor and soon fell asleep, thinking how many, with feather beds and pillows, would sleep less soundly.

“After an early breakfast, I rode slowly up the valley, visiting several gold-washers on my way, and buying a little gold. These diggings are of a very different character to those at Ballarat, being much more widely distributed; consequently, the tents of the diggers are scattered up and down the various valleys over a considerable distance, more or less thickly, according to the richness of the locality. After looking about us and making some inquiry, we decided upon pitching a tent (if we could get one) close to the Commissioner’s, where I could carry on the business of gold-buying. Meanwhile we made a few purchases, and at night got accommodation in the tent of an acquaintance. No tent was to be bought or borrowed, and therefore as there was no time to lose, we set about making one. We got the loan of a tarpauling, and then set to work, dug holes,

cut down trees, stripped some bark off others, in which, by-the-bye, a black fellow helped us, and by night had our tent pretty well secured. You would have laughed, or perhaps stared with astonishment, if you had seen me one minute chopping away a tree, or carrying it on my shoulder, and the next sitting on a log, weighing gold, and counting out the bank notes, for we did not lose any opportunity of buying when it occurred.

“The next day was Saturday (the 15th).—We were again early at work. Did more to our tent, and bought more gold . . . My furniture consists of a piece of bark stripped from a gum-tree, and nailed to four bits of rough wood in the form of a table (on which, moreover, I am now writing), on which I weigh my gold; my wardrobe, what I brought on horseback, and a pair of blankets. On Sunday, when I was as glad of a day of rest as any of the diggers, I read the Church service to myself, and only went out a little in the afternoon, when the weather cleared up.

“*Monday, 17th.*—I was busy all day long buying gold, writing letters for the post, and in the evening making up my bags of gold for the Government escort, which was to leave Melbourne the following morning. I found I had purchased altogether just 600 ounces, for which

I paid on an average about fifty-seven shillings per ounce.

“ The following morning presented a bustling and picturesque scene, when the escort was preparing to start. Previously to this week only two lots had been sent down from here by Government, and each time on horseback ; but the success of the diggers had so increased, that there was now gold to the amount of 25,000*l.*, and a chaise-cart was necessary. The cavalcade consisted of two mounted troopers ahead, then the chaise-cart, driven by an officer with an armed guard beside him, and six more troopers on horseback behind, four of them, I think, of the native black police. The pretty scene alluded to was when all this was preparing. The hilly open forest land is in itself park-like, and on a rising ground the Commissioner’s establishment is placed, consisting of several tents and two or three gungas, or bark-huts, made by the native police, after their own fashion. The troopers’ horses were standing about ready saddled, and the men themselves, both black and white, and in various costumes, gave life to the picture, while of course some interest was added by the knowledge of the valuable load contained in the cart, and the rugged forest country through which it had to travel. I lost sight of the train as it wound

among the trees, and in due time heard that it had safely reached its destination. . . . My occupation during the remainder of the week was very uniform, but I occasionally took a ride or walk among the gold-finders, but did not like to leave my tent for long at a time, as my companion had now left me. About this part there are two kinds of diggings; surface-digging, which is simply skimming off a thin layer of gravel from the surface of some of the hills, to the depth of a few inches, when a bed of gravel is reached, and hole-digging, which is digging down in hollow places in the streams, and between hills, and searching the fissures which exist between the slate-rock there found. Both kinds have proved very profitable to many. As an extreme case, three men, last week, got above 30 lbs. weight of gold in less than two days, out of a little patch of gravel of a few feet square, and not more than six inches deep. And, as an extreme case of hole-digging, I heard to-day of four men who took seven pint pots of gold out of a hole, or fissure, on Tuesday last. What a pint pannikin of gold weighs, I do not know, but, at a rough guess, I should think this prize would be worth not less than 3,000%. Of course these are but two extraordinary cases among some thousands of diggers; but, nevertheless, the great number of persons who are

getting rich in this district is almost incredible. It is really most absurd to see rough, illiterate labourers come with their ounces and pounds of gold tied up in a bit of dirty rag, and sometimes to see them turn out of their dirty pockets, among bits of tobacco, bread, &c. twenty or thirty shillings' worth of the loose grains that have escaped the fragile package. Most of them bring it in the little round wooden match-boxes.

“ The main valley of the diggers, which extends to where I am located, for about four miles, has an extraordinary aspect by day, from the number of tents and diggers scattered throughout it; and still more so by night, when the multitude of fires would lead a person to suppose that he was looking down upon a large town, till, on near approach, he perceives that each fire has its own little group of men clustered round it in front of their tent, some of them cooking their supper, some smoking their pipes, and not a few singing songs; each group presenting him, as he rides along, with a series of tableaux worthy of the pencil of a Teniers.

“ The following Sunday was a finer day than the last. In the morning I took my nag, which had fared but badly on his tether lately, about a mile away, where there was some good feed; and while he enjoyed a couple of hours of sweet grass,

I sat upon a tree, and united with those who, at a distance, were engaged in the services of our Church. In the afternoon a Clergyman read



GOLD DIGGERS CROSSING OVER THE BLUE MOUNTAINS.

prayers, and preached a sermon in the open ground, near the Commissioner's tent, where a congregation of about one hundred and fifty mustered together in a circle round him, joining

in the responses, and singing the hundredth Psalm very well. Our service had just closed when the escort arrived from Melbourne. I was sorry to see it thus travelling on Sunday, but was told that it was unavoidable this time, and that henceforward it would always leave on Tuesday and return on Saturday."

Although the details thus given refer only to one locality, they will nevertheless serve to illustrate the general character and features of all the diggings. Since the period to which they more especially refer, a large number of other places have been discovered where gold is to be procured with equal ease, and in equal abundance, and almost every ship that arrives bears its rich freight of the precious metal to our shores, with the intelligence that there is no falling off in the produce of the mines, and that the emigration from the home country cannot be too great to supply the gaps left in the general occupations of the colonies, or to fill up the measure of profitable labour at the mines. The following tabular view of the quantities of gold obtained up to the 20th March of this year (so far as could be ascertained,) affords us an accurate idea of the extent to which the search had been prosecuted, and of the success which had attended it:—

	Ounces.	Value.
Mount Alexander . . . . .	208,000	£864,000
Gipps' Land . . . . .	15,000	36,000
Albany, to Feb. 20 . . . . .	4,000	12,000
Ballarat, to Feb. 21 . . . . .	106,000	315,000
Moruch } Araluar } to March 10 . . . . .	420,000	1,620,000
Batesford, to March 5 . . . . .	19,000	48,000
Anderson's Creek, to Jan. 31 . . . . .	4,500	14,000
Geelong, to March 3 . . . . .	7,700	23,700
Yallock, to Feb. 10 . . . . .	5,100	15,900
Hopkins' River, to March 1 . . . . .	28,000	82,500
Mount Wellington . . . . .	29,856	89,650
Mount Disappointment, to March 10 . . . . .	18,000	41,550
Ferry Creek, to Feb. 16 . . . . .	12,000	38,500
Turon . . . . .	41,000	130,300
Bungonia . . . . .	16,000	48,500
Pepper's Creek, to Feb. 26 . . . . .	3,550	14,600
Bell's Creek, to March 3 . . . . .	7,500	41,000
Major's Creek, to Feb. 13 . . . . .	4,000	12,300
Tuena, to Feb. 16 . . . . .	3,500	10,900
Rativa Hill, to Feb. 25 . . . . .	700	2,200
Ophir, to March 1 . . . . .	1,800	2,500
Braidwood, to Feb. 26 . . . . .	10,000	31,000
River Plenty, to March 1 . . . . .	6,800	21,950
Small Diggings, to Feb. 26 . . . . .	17,000	51,500
	<u>984,006</u>	<u>£3,567,550</u>

So that in the course of ten months from the first working, with all the disadvantages of unskilled labour, and imperfect machinery or apparatus, the gold-diggers had procured in round numbers about forty tons of gold, of the value of considerably upwards of three millions and a half sterling! When Columbus dis-



covered the New World, it was calculated that about thirty-three millions in value of gold and silver were in possession of the civilized nations of Europe, which quantity was augmented during the three centuries in which the working of the mines there was uninterrupted, to upwards of three hundred millions, giving an average annual produce of less than a million sterling per annum.

It is calculated that the gold field of Australia is about 1,000 miles in length, by 300 or 400 in breadth, only a very small portion of which has yet been even explored. Should the yield continue to increase with the same rapidity it has manifested up to this time, we may expect that it will produce in thirty or forty years as much gold as America produced in three hundred, and even should it simply maintain the present supply, it will produce the same quantity in less than one-third of the time.

What effect this enormous quantity of the precious metal may be expected to produce, is simply a matter of speculation; but without entering very deeply into political economy, it will be evident that, as the precious metals are not consumable in the politico-economic sense of the term, the diggers are therefore non-producers, and consequently consumable articles will rise in price, on account of the smaller

number of hands engaged in their production, as compared with the total population. This result is already apparent in Australia, although it may be many years before it becomes apparent in other countries. Besides this, however, the mere abundance of gold, as compared with other articles of commerce, will naturally tend to raise the price of the latter as compared with the former,—thus effecting a real diminution in the value of gold. No disturbing effect, however, will apparently be produced as regards the banking interests, inasmuch as bank notes only represent a certain fixed quantity of gold, and a depreciation of the purchasing power of the latter will be partaken of in an equal degree by the former, and there will consequently be an invariable equilibrium between the two. Those alarmists therefore who have been inclined to predicate the ultimate ruin of the Bank of England, because it is compelled to buy gold of all comers at 3*l.* 17*s.* 10½*d.* per oz., may dismiss their fears, when they remember that the price is paid in bank notes, the representative value of which will be exactly equal to the current value of the gold for which they were issued.

Dismissing, however, the subject of the effects of the discovery as regards the exchanges, let us turn our attention to its probable results in another point of view. The two richest gold

deposits ever known on the globe are in possession of the two most polished, free, and civilized nations the world ever saw—England and the United States; and whilst California will draw together a mighty Anglo-Saxon population on the eastern side of the North Pacific, Australia will be attracting to its fertile shores an equally mighty host on the west side of the South Pacific. A magnificent ocean, covering more than one-third the surface of the globe, and whose very name proclaims its fitness for the most extensive navigation, rolls its waters between the two. On the opposite side to California, the immense country of China and the rich isles of Japan, whose inhabitants have hitherto held aloof from intercourse with their fellow-men, invite the energies of America to endeavour to break the bonds of exclusiveness which so long have characterised these semi-barbarous people, and bring them into friendly commercial relations with the other nations of the globe. In immediate proximity to Australia lies an enormous group of islands, the two largest of which are scarce known to the world, but all of which teem with the richest and most valuable products of the vegetable kingdom. These are at present in the sole occupation of hordes of savages and pirates, incapable of appreciating their beauty or their

utility. These call to Australia, when itself shall be more fully populated, to undertake the task of infusing, if possible, civilization into these barbarians; and the proximity of Australia to our East Indian possessions would indicate a cooperation in still further developing the resources of those rich countries, until we shall have reached, not for conquest, but for commercial and civilizing purposes, the confines of Thibet. Siberia, further north, is in the hands of Russia, that King Stork in conquest, and King Log in civilization and freedom, and for a further time must be left to her guidance. Stopped in our operations to the north-west, we turn again eastward, and behold on the opposite side of the Pacific the magnificent but undeveloped country of South America. The small end of the wedge which is to drive on the progress of civilization is already inserted at Panama; and although the bleak and inhospitable neighbourhood of Cape Horn affords scanty encouragement, yet there also we have obtained a foothold.

These are mere glimpses, as it were, into the dim vista of futurity; but who that will cast a retrospective glance at the progress of the first half of the nineteenth century shall say what may not be accomplished in the latter half? Should England, as some have predicted, be

doomed to share the fate of Assyria, of Greece, of Rome, and of Carthage, it will at least have given birth to two herculean republics, who will each take a hemisphere under its control, and with Anglo-Saxon energy, armed in the one hand with the sublime precepts of the Founder of Christianity, and in the other with the powers of nature which they have subdued to their service, they will extend their bloodless conquests, until all mankind shall recognise the dictates of the Creator, and form one universal brotherhood. To this end, however remote, may we not recognise a providential arrangement in the nearly simultaneous discoveries of the Gold Fields of California and of Australia?

THE END.

**LONDON:**  
**R. CLAY, PRINTER, BREAD STREET HILL.**











